No. 1862

22p

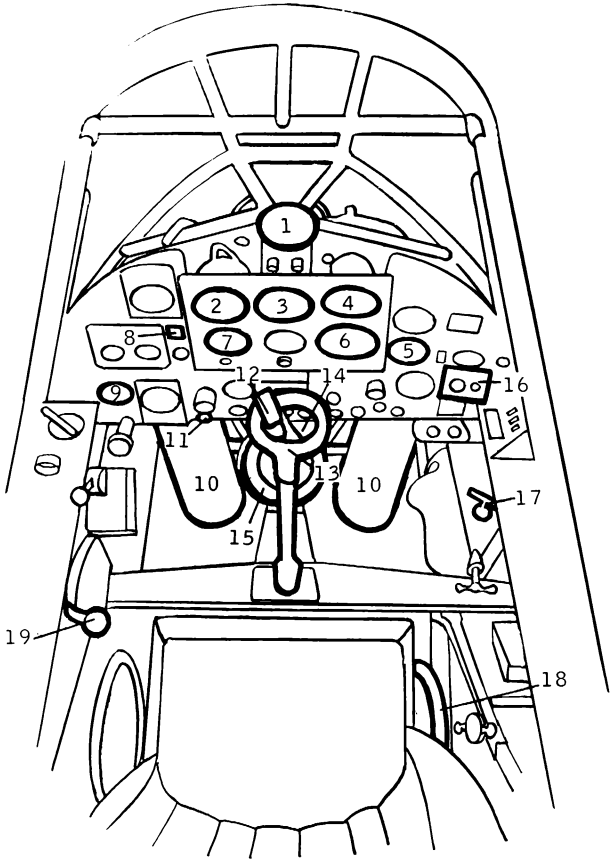
Commando

WAR STORIES IN PICTURES

40c

ICE-COLD COURAGE

KEY TO THE COCKPITS

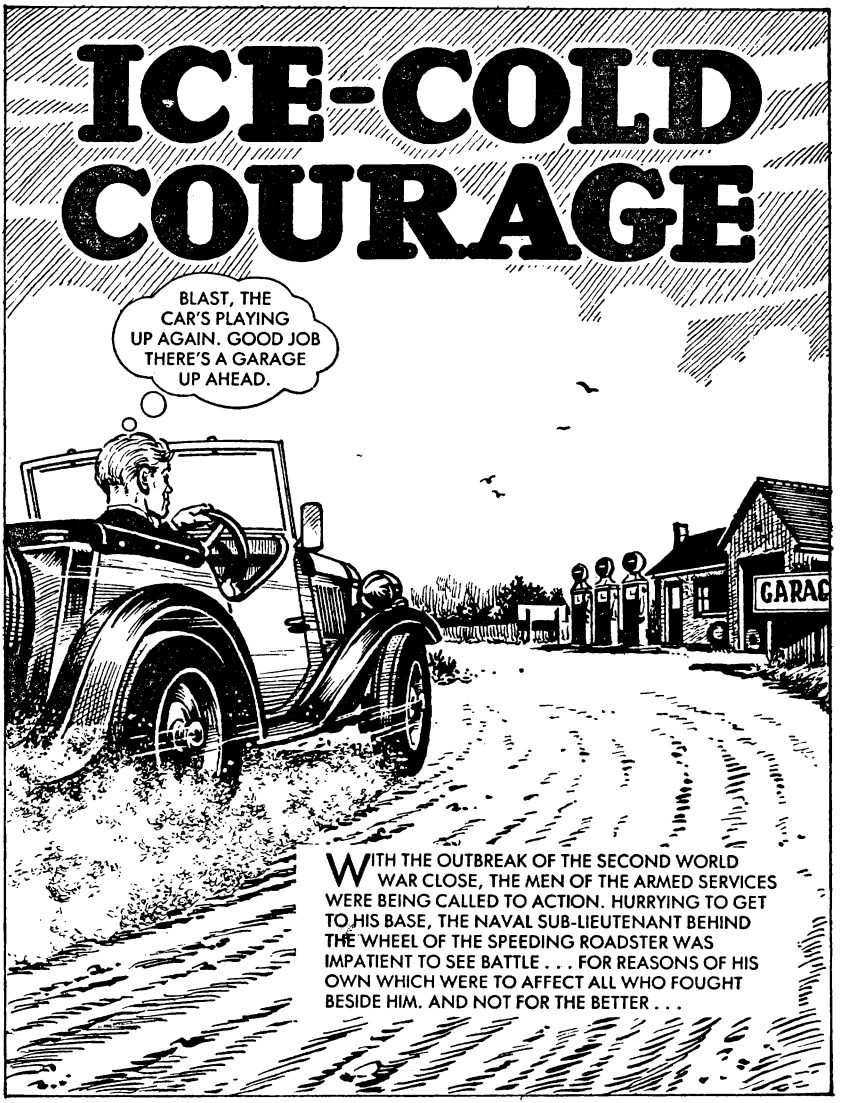


No. 12 LYSANDER

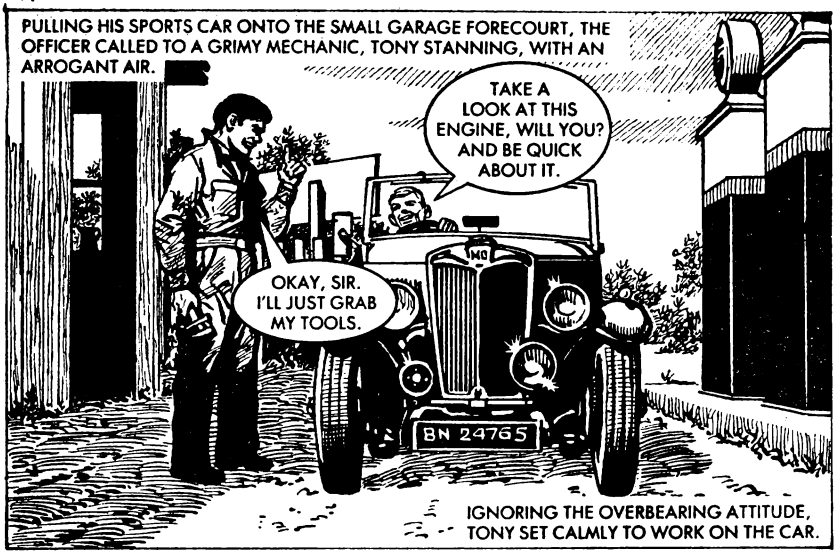
SPECIALLY designed as an Army reconnaissance plane, the Westland Lysander had one great asset — its ability to remain airborne at only 55 mph, an ideal speed for spotting ground movements.
It was also capable of landing and taking off in very confined spaces, so when fitted with long-range fuel tanks it was extremely useful for the perilous task of landing intelligence agents behind enemy lines in occupied Europe.

1. Mount for reflector sight
2. Airspeed indicator
3. Artificial horizon
4. Rate-of-climb indicator
5. Rev counter
6. Turn and bank indicator
7. Altimeter
8. Ignition switches
9. Fuel gauge
10. Rudder pedals
11. Propeller pitch control
12. Gun button
13. Control column
14. Brake level
15. Compass
16. Engine starting panel
17. Morse key
18. Seat raising wheel
19. Throttle lever

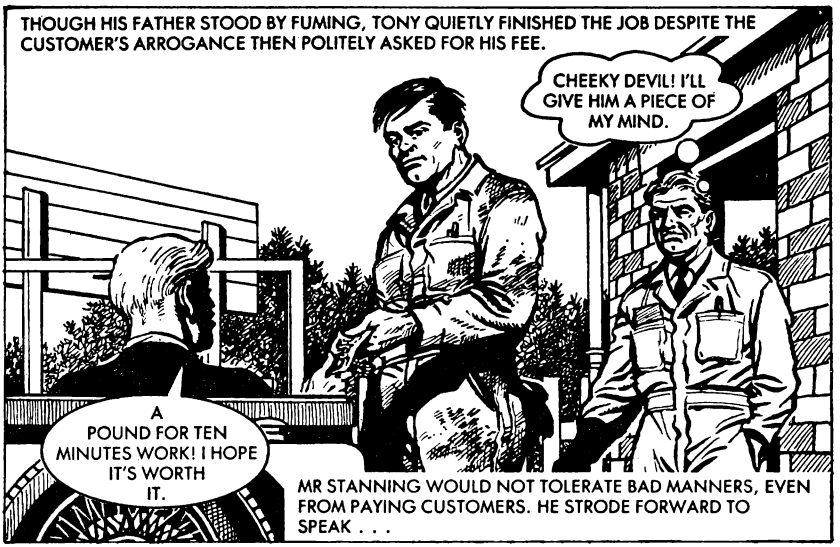
ICE-COLD COURAGE

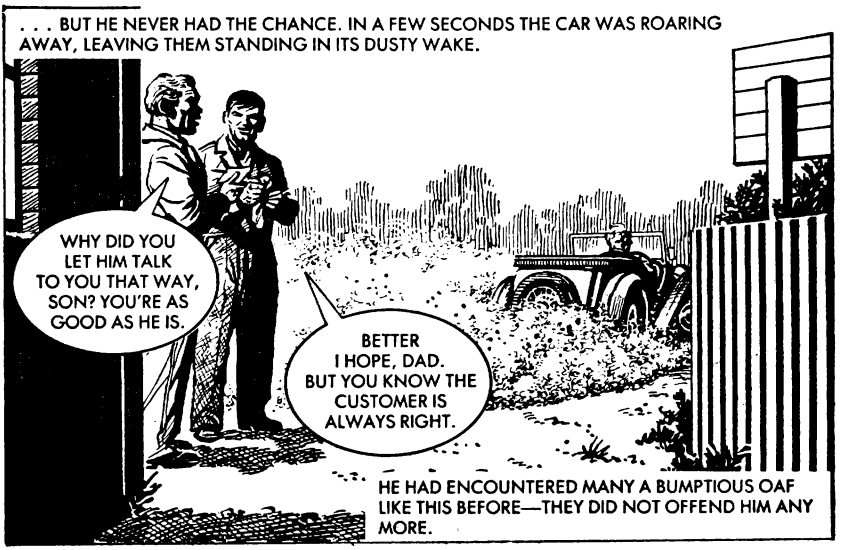


WITH THE OUTBREAK OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR CLOSE, THE MEN OF THE ARMED SERVICES WERE BEING CALLED TO ACTION. HURRYING TO GET TO HIS BASE, THE NAVAL SUB-LIEUTENANT BEHIND THE WHEEL OF THE SPEEDING ROADSTER WAS IMPATIENT TO SEE BATTLE . . . FOR REASONS OF HIS OWN WHICH WERE TO AFFECT ALL WHO FOUGHT BESIDE HIM. AND NOT FOR THE BETTER . . .

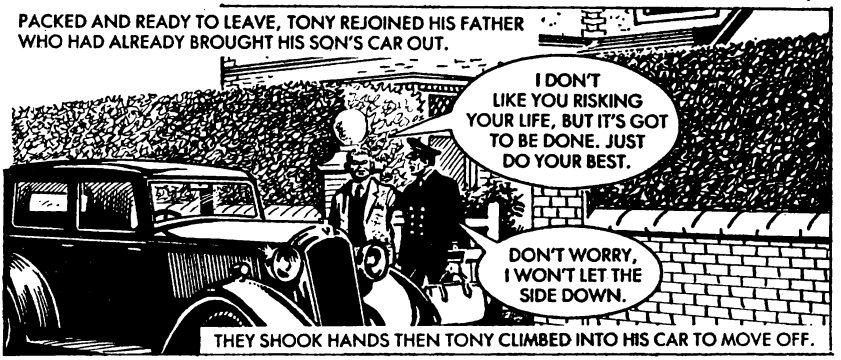

PULLING HIS SPORTS CAR ONTO THE SMALL GARAGE FORECOURT, THE OFFICER CALLED TO A GRIMY MECHANIC, TONY STANNING, WITH AN ARROGANT AIR.
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS ENGINE, WILL YOU? AND BE QUICK ABOUT IT.
OKAY, SIR. I'LL JUST GRAB MY TOOLS.
BN 24765
IGNORING THE OVERBEARING ATTITUDE, TONY SET CALMLY TO WORK ON THE CAR.

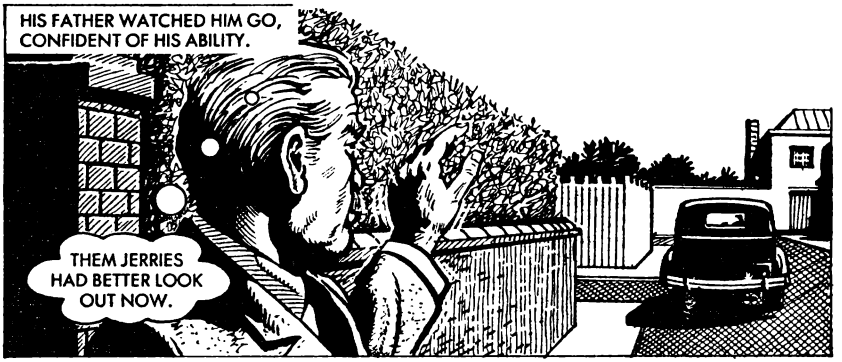
WATCHED BY HIS FATHER, WHO OWNED THE PLACE, HE QUICKLY LOCATED THE FAULT THEN PUT IT RIGHT. HE FOUND THE DRIVER UNGRATEFUL JUST THE SAME.
THAT SHOULD DO IT. GOT FAR TO GO?
MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS. I HAVEN'T TIME TO CHAT TO GREASE-MONKEYS ALL DAY.


THOUGH HIS FATHER STOOD BY FUMING, TONY QUIETLY FINISHED THE JOB DESPITE THE CUSTOMER'S ARROGANCE THEN POLITELY ASKED FOR HIS FEE.
CHEEKY DEVIL! I'LL GIVE HIM A PIECE OF MY MIND.
A POUND FOR TEN MINUTES WORK! I HOPE IT'S WORTH IT.
MR STANNING WOULD NOT TOLERATE BAD MANNERS, EVEN FROM PAYING CUSTOMERS. HE STRODE FORWARD TO SPEAK . . .


. . . BUT HE NEVER HAD THE CHANCE. IN A FEW SECONDS THE CAR WAS ROARING AWAY, LEAVING THEM STANDING IN ITS DUSTY WAKE.
WHY DID YOU LET HIM TALK TO YOU THAT WAY, SON? YOU'RE AS GOOD AS HE IS.
BETTER I HOPE, DAD. BUT YOU KNOW THE CUSTOMER IS ALWAYS RIGHT.
HE HAD ENCOUNTERED MANY A BUMPTIOUS OAF LIKE THIS BEFORE—THEY DID NOT OFFEND HIM ANY MORE.

HE WAS MORE INTERESTED IN THE ENVELOPE HIS FATHER WAS HOLDING.
THIS TELEGRAM HAS JUST ARRIVED . . . FOR YOU.
TONY WAS ALSO A FLEET AIR ARM OFFICER — A SUB-LIEUTENANT PILOT. MOTOR ENGINEERING WAS ONLY A PASTIME.
THE BALLOON'S GONE UP, DAD. I'VE BEEN RECALLED.
YOU'D BETTER GET WASHED UP THEN.
THE GERMANS HAD ATTACKED POLAND, FORCING BRITAIN INTO THE CONFLICT.
ALTHOUGH RELUCTANT TO CUT SHORT HIS LEAVE SO EARLY, HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO CARRYING OUT THE WORK HE HAD BEEN TRAINED FOR—PILOTING A TORPEDO-BOMBER.
I KNOW " STRINGBAGS " ARE SUPPOSED TO BE OUT OF DATE, BUT I'LL BET THEY'LL GIVE THE JERRIES A RUN FOR THEIR MONEY.
" STRINGBAG " WAS THE AFFECTIONATE NICKNAME FOR THE FAIREY SWORDFISH BIPLANE.


PACKED AND READY TO LEAVE, TONY REJOINED HIS FATHER WHO HAD ALREADY BROUGHT HIS SON'S CAR OUT.
I DON'T LIKE YOU RISKING YOUR LIFE, BUT IT'S GOT TO BE DONE. JUST DO YOUR BEST.
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T LET THE SIDE DOWN.
THEY SHOOK HANDS THEN TONY CLIMBED INTO HIS CAR TO MOVE OFF.

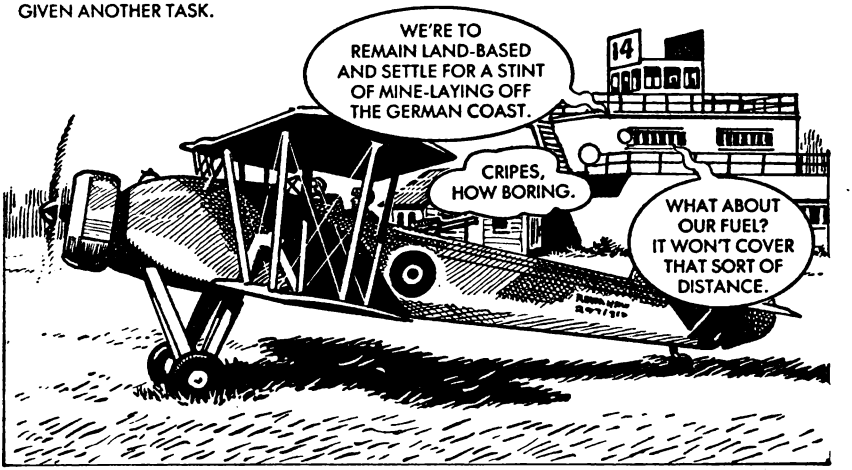

HIS FATHER WATCHED HIM GO, CONFIDENT OF HIS ABILITY.
THEM JERRIES HAD BETTER LOOK OUT NOW.

TONY SOON REACHED THE BASE WHERE THE SENTRY AT THE GATE GRINNED WHEN HE RECOGNISED HIM.
HMS
NICE TO SEE A FAMILIAR FACE, SIR. I DON'T KNOW A SINGLE BLOKE OUT OF THE NEW BUNCH THAT ARRIVED HERE TODAY.
WE'LL SOON CHANGE THAT.

AFTER REPORTING TO THE DUTY OFFICER, HE PUT HIS KIT IN HIS ROOM AND SET OFF TOWARDS THE BRIEFING ROOM, SOON SPOTTING HIS BEST CHUM.
HEY, CHARLIE! HOW ARE YOU DOING?
WELL, LOOK WHO'S BACK.
SUB-LIEUTENANT CHARLIE WILEY WAS A FELLOW PILOT WITH A READY GRIN.

THE BASE WAS RIFE WITH RUMOURS ABOUT THEIR FUTURE ROLES. THE SQUADRON LEADER, LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER PAUL BRICE, WAS WAITING TO ADDRESS THEM.
SETTLE DOWN, YOU LOT, WE'VE A LOT TO GET THROUGH.
THEY CERTAINLY HAD. ALL WERE TO FIND THAT PAUL WAS A TOUGH YET LIKEABLE C.O. WHO PUSHED HIMSELF AS HARD AS HIS MEN.

TO EVERYONE'S DISAPPOINTMENT THEY HAD NO CHANCE OF IMMEDIATE ACTION. AT THIS PERIOD IN THE WAR THERE WERE ALMOST NO HOSTILITIES, SO THE SWORDFISH CREWS WERE GIVEN ANOTHER TASK.



IT WAS A GOOD POINT. HOWEVER PAUL HAD HIS ANSWER READY.

THE LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER EXPLAINED THAT THE TANKS HAD BEEN PLACED IN THE OBSERVER'S SEATING COMPARTMENT. NOW THE CREW, NORMALLY CONSISTING OF THREE MEN, WOULD BE REDUCED TO TWO.

THE LADS WERE LIFTED A GREAT DEAL BY PAUL'S POSITIVE ATTITUDE. WITH HIS LEADERSHIP THEY DID NOT EXPECT TO HAVE TO SETTLE FOR MINE-LAYING OPERATIONS FOR LONG.

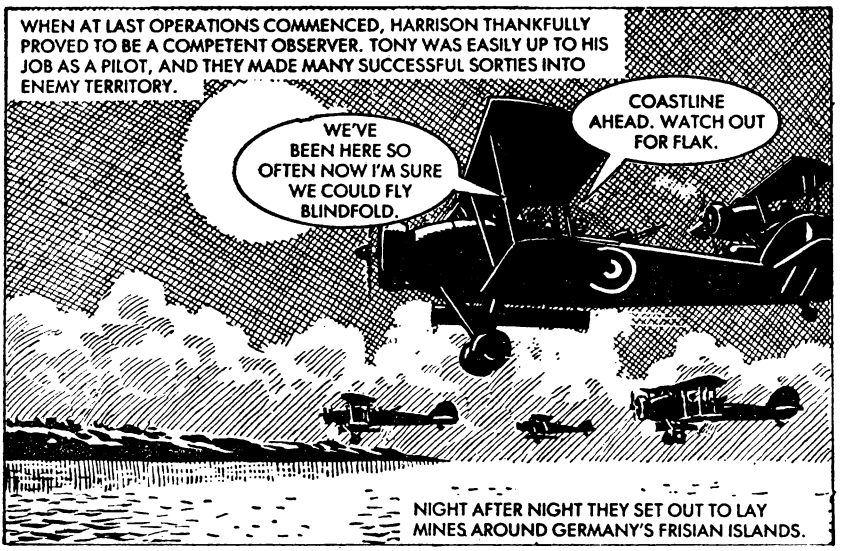
HE TURNED OUT TO BE THE SNOB TONY HAD SERVED AT THE GARAGE EARLIER THAT DAY

AS THEY EYED EACH OTHER WARILY, HARRISON'S ARROGANCE ROSE TO THE SURFACE.

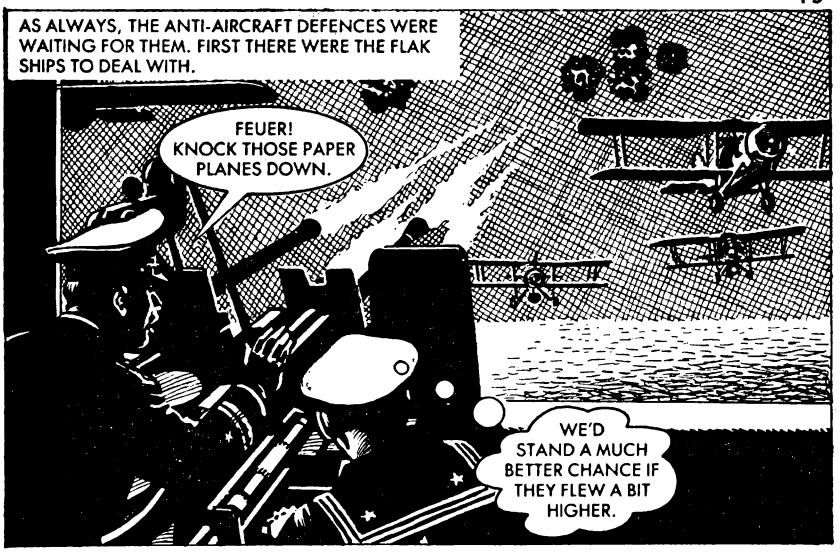
AS HE STRODE FROM THE ROOM, THE OBSERVER MADE HIS OPINIONS OF HIS NEW PILOT VERY CLEAR. THINGS WERE GOING TO BE DIFFICULT RIGHT FROM THE START WITH THIS SELF-OPINIONATED SON OF A VERY WEALTHY, NAVAL FAMILY.

THE PARTING SHOTS WERE OVERHEARD BY CHARLIE WHO INVITED THE TWO TO THE BAR FOR A DRINK. ONLY TONY ACCEPTED HOWEVER.

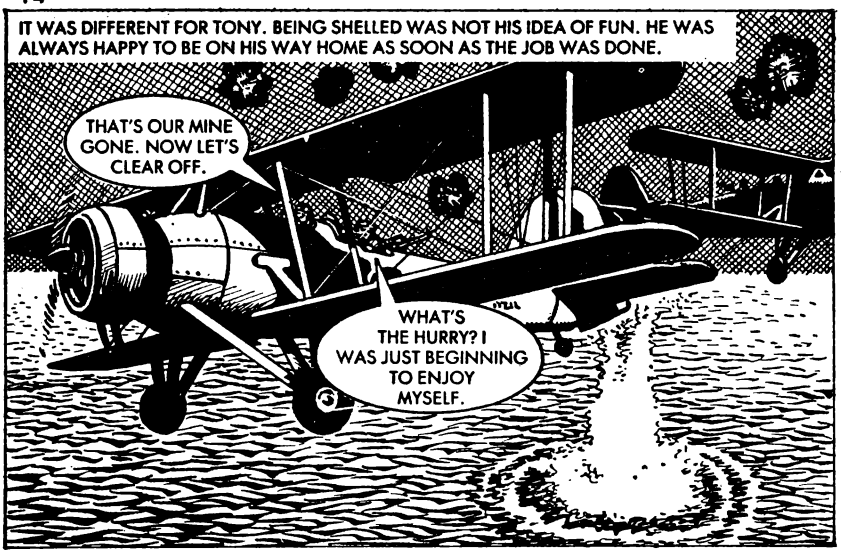
WHEN AT LAST OPERATIONS COMMENCED, HARRISON THANKFULLY PROVED TO BE A COMPETENT OBSERVER. TONY WAS EASILY UP TO HIS JOB AS A PILOT, AND THEY MADE MANY SUCCESSFUL SORTIES INTO ENEMY TERRITORY.



NIGHT AFTER NIGHT THEY SET OUT TO LAY MINES AROUND GERMANY'S FRISIAN ISLANDS.


AS ALWAYS, THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCES WERE WAITING FOR THEM. FIRST THERE WERE THE FLAK SHIPS TO DEAL WITH.
FEUER! KNOCK THOSE PAPER PLANES DOWN.
WE'D STAND A MUCH BETTER CHANCE IF THEY FLEW A BIT HIGHER.

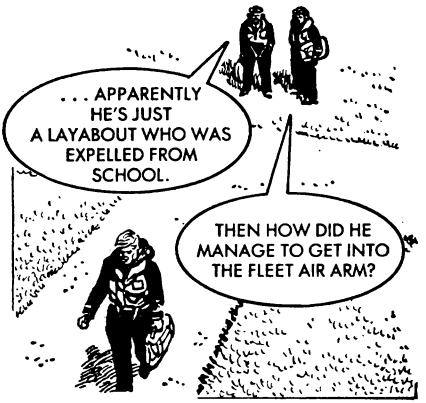
THE STRINGBAGS FLEW TOO LOW TO BE HIT BY THESE GUNS WHICH WERE ANGLED TO AIM AT TARGETS AT HIGHER ALTITUDE. THEY SPED PAST AS SHELLS ROARED UP TO GREET THEM.
THINGS ARE WARMING UP NOW. WHO SAID THAT MINE-LAYING WAS BORING?
REMEMBER WE'VE STILL GOT THE LAND-BASED GUNS TO TACKLE YET.
HARRISON SEEMED LITTLE MOVED BY THE FIERY ONSLAUGHT.

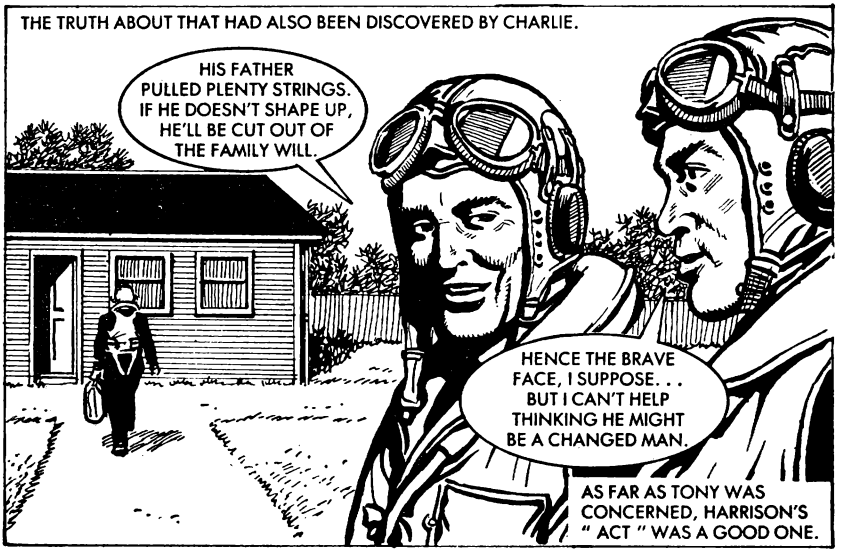

IT WAS DIFFERENT FOR TONY. BEING SHELLED WAS NOT HIS IDEA OF FUN. HE WAS ALWAYS HAPPY TO BE ON HIS WAY HOME AS SOON AS THE JOB WAS DONE.
THAT'S OUR MINE GONE. NOW LET'S CLEAR OFF.
WHAT'S THE HURRY? I WAS JUST BEGINNING TO ENJOY MYSELF.

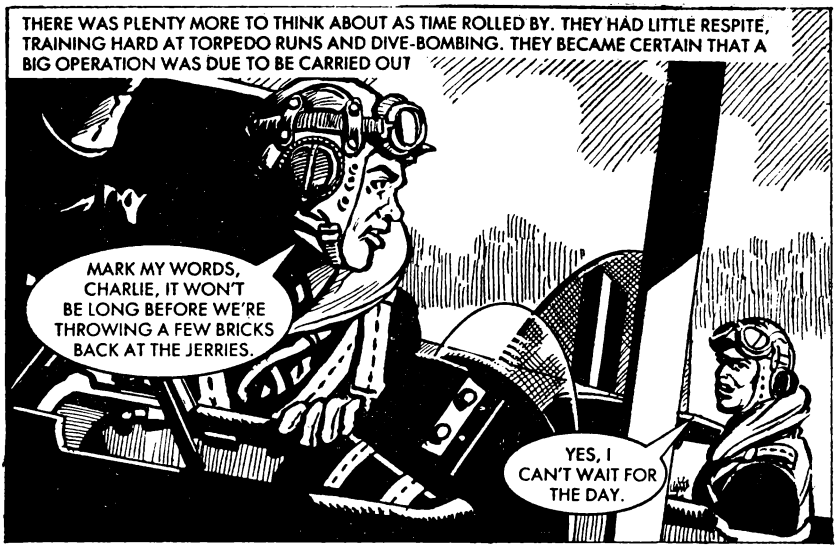
AS THEY BANKED AWAY FROM THE TARGET, THE GUNNERS BECAME MORE ACCURATE.
CRIPES! THAT WAS A NEAR THING.
A BRIGHT ORANGE FLASH ERUPTED IN FRONT OF TONY, PEPPERING THE STRINGBAG WITH RED-HOT METAL SPLINTERS.

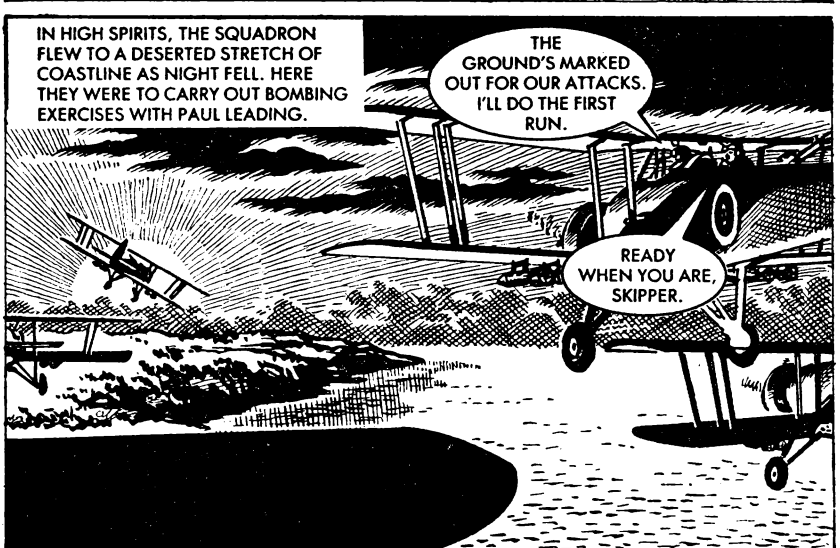
AS HE FLEW CLEAR, HE WAS TREMBLING LIKE A LEAF. HE WONDERED IF HARRISON FELT THE SAME.
PHEW, THAT FLAK REALLY RATTLES ME.
WELL, IT'S BOUND TO GET WORSE AS THINGS GO ON.
LITTLE SYMPATHY CAME FROM HIS OBSERVER.
IT'S A PITY YOUR FAMILY HASN'T GOT A NAVAL BACKGROUND LIKE MINE. THEN YOU WOULDN'T KNOW THE MEANING OF FEAR.
TONY WISHED HE HAD KEPT HIS MOUTH SHUT.
THE REST OF THE JOURNEY HOME PASSED IN SILENCE. IT WAS ONLY AFTER LANDING WHEN CHARLIE APPEARED, THAT TONY CONFIDED IN HIM ABOUT HIS FEARS.
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT IT?
ALL RIGHT, UNTIL JERRY STARTS THROWING BRICKS ABOUT. THEN I REALLY GET ON EDGE!
EVEN THOUGH HE WAS GREATLY RELIEVED TO FIND THAT HIS BEHAVIOUR WAS NOT UNUSUAL, HE STILL ALMOST ADMIRED HARRISON.

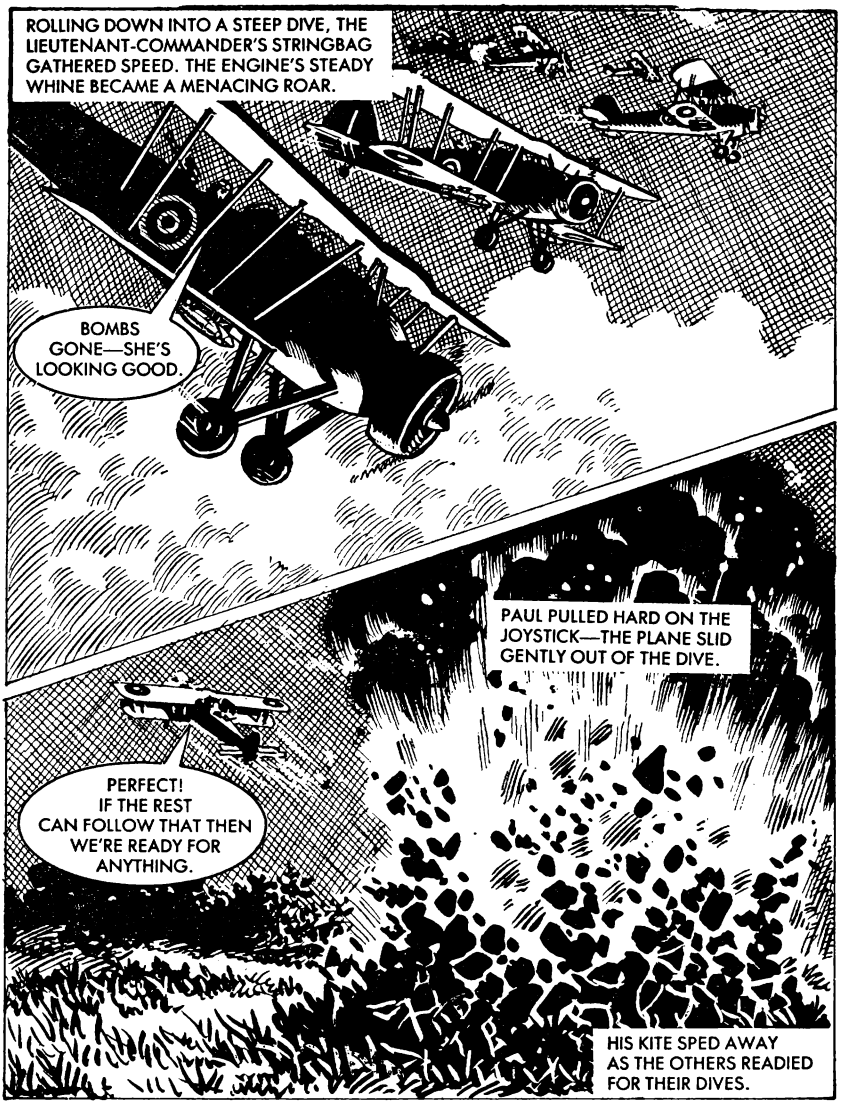
DESPITE HIS ATTITUDE, FEAR WAS NOT ONE OF THE OBSERVER'S SHORTCOMINGS.
I WISH I KNEW WHAT MADE HIM TICK, THEN MAYBE SOME OF IT WOULD RUB OFF ON ME.
ALL YOU NEED IS TO BE A GOOD ACTOR— HE'S NOTHING SPECIAL.


CHARLIE REVEALED THAT HE HAD FOUND A FEW THINGS OUT ABOUT HARRISON, NONE OF THEM GOOD.
. . . APPARENTLY HE'S JUST A LAYABOUT WHO WAS EXPELLED FROM SCHOOL.
THEN HOW DID HE MANAGE TO GET INTO THE FLEET AIR ARM?

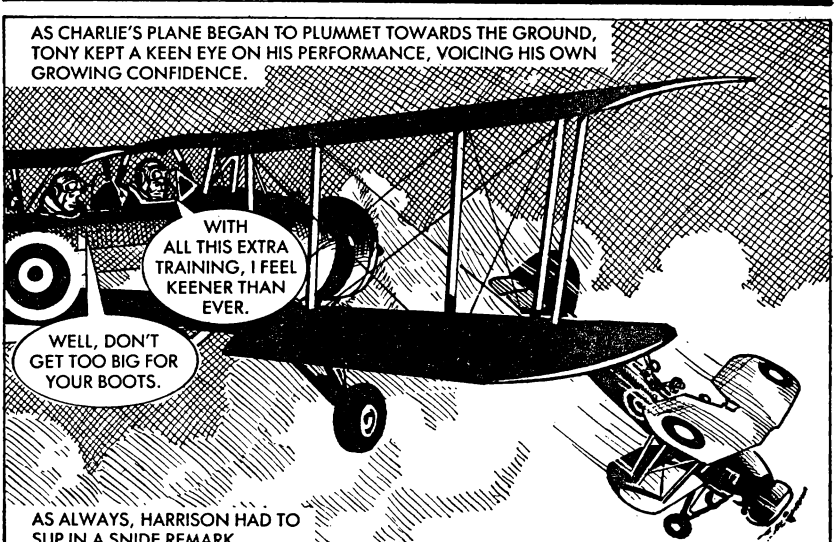

THE TRUTH ABOUT THAT HAD ALSO BEEN DISCOVERED BY CHARLIE.
HIS FATHER PULLED PLENTY STRINGS. IF HE DOESN'T SHAPE UP, HE'LL BE CUT OUT OF THE FAMILY WILL.
HENCE THE BRAVE FACE, I SUPPOSE. . . BUT I CAN'T HELP THINKING HE MIGHT BE A CHANGED MAN.
AS FAR AS TONY WAS CONCERNED, HARRISON'S " ACT " WAS A GOOD ONE.


THERE WAS PLENTY MORE TO THINK ABOUT AS TIME ROLLED BY. THEY HAD LITTLE RESPITE, TRAINING HARD AT TORPEDO RUNS AND DIVE-BOMBING. THEY BECAME CERTAIN THAT A BIG OPERATION WAS DUE TO BE CARRIED OUT
MARK MY WORDS, CHARLIE, IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE WE'RE THROWING A FEW BRICKS BACK AT THE JERRIES.
YES, I CAN'T WAIT FOR THE DAY.

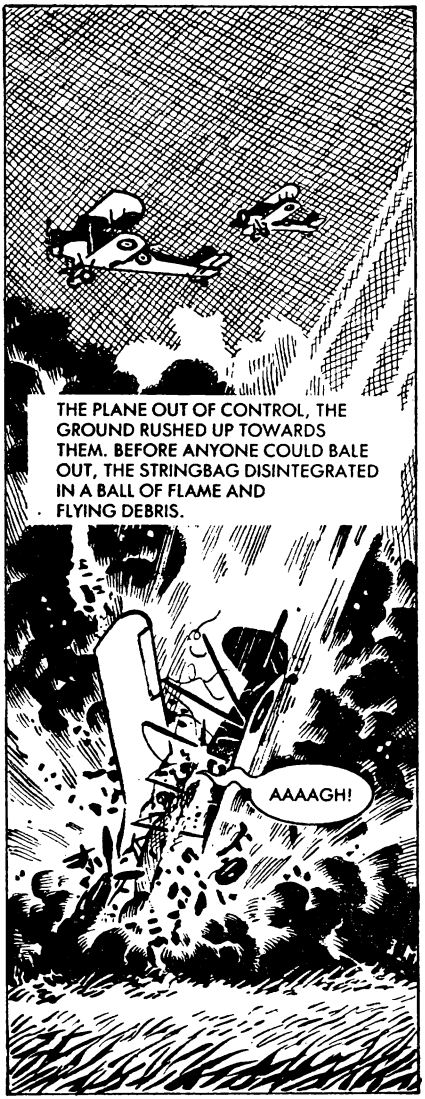

IN HIGH SPIRITS, THE SQUADRON FLEW TO A DESERTED STRETCH OF COASTLINE AS NIGHT FELL. HERE THEY WERE TO CARRY OUT BOMBING EXERCISES WITH PAUL LEADING.
THE GROUND'S MARKED OUT FOR OUR ATTACKS. I'LL DO THE FIRST RUN.
READY WHEN YOU ARE, SKIPPER.

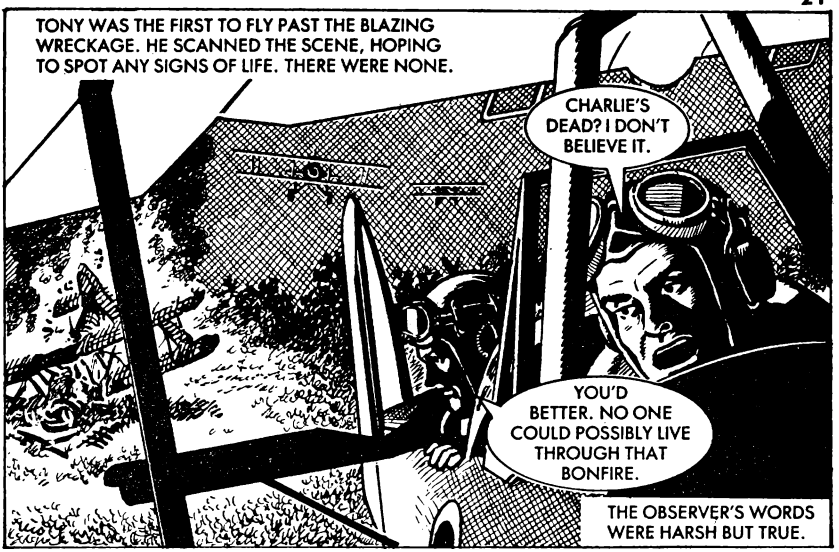

ROLLING DOWN INTO A STEEP DIVE, THE LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER'S STRINGBAG GATHERED SPEED. THE ENGINE'S STEADY WHINE BECAME A MENACING ROAR.
BOMBS GONE—SHE'S LOOKING GOOD.
PAUL PULLED HARD ON THE JOYSTICK—THE PLANE SLID GENTLY OUT OF THE DIVE.
PERFECT! IF THE REST CAN FOLLOW THAT THEN WE'RE READY FOR ANYTHING.
HIS KITE SPED AWAY AS THE OTHERS READIED FOR THEIR DIVES.

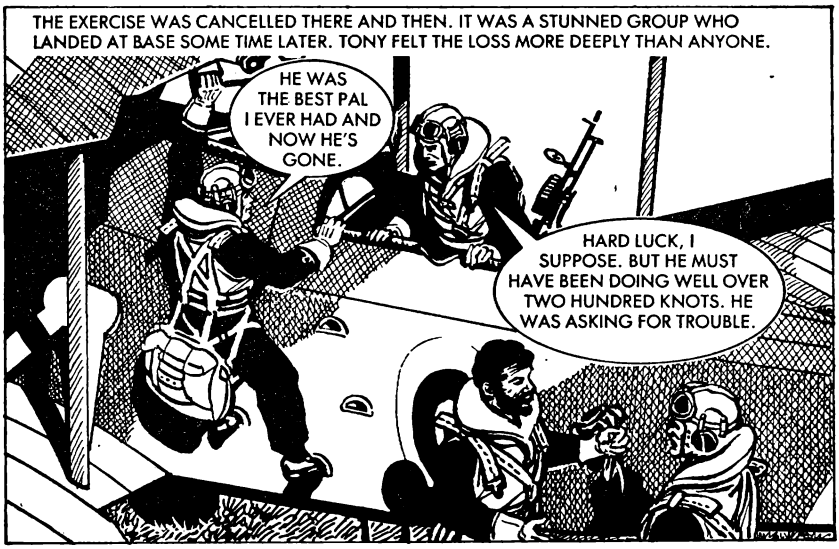
CHARLIE WAS NEXT IN LINE. DETERMINED TO DO WELL, HE DROPPED INTO HIS ATTACK LIKE A STONE FROM A CATAPULT.
HOLD TIGHT, WE'RE ON OUR WAY.
PUT UP A GOOD SHOW, CHUM. THE WORST SHOT BUYS THE BEERS TOMORROW.


AS CHARLIE'S PLANE BEGAN TO PLUMMET TOWARDS THE GROUND, TONY KEPT A KEEN EYE ON HIS PERFORMANCE, VOICING HIS OWN GROWING CONFIDENCE.
WITH ALL THIS EXTRA TRAINING, I FEEL KEENER THAN EVER.
WELL, DON'T GET TOO BIG FOR YOUR BOOTS.
AS ALWAYS, HARRISON HAD TO SLIP IN A SNIDE REMARK.

MEANWHILE CHARLIE HAD RUN INTO TROUBLE AT THE BOTTOM OF HIS DIVE. HE PULLED WITH ALL HIS MIGHT ON THE JOYSTICK.
WHAT'S WRONG?
WE'VE DROPPED OUR BOMBS, BUT I CAN'T PULL OUT.

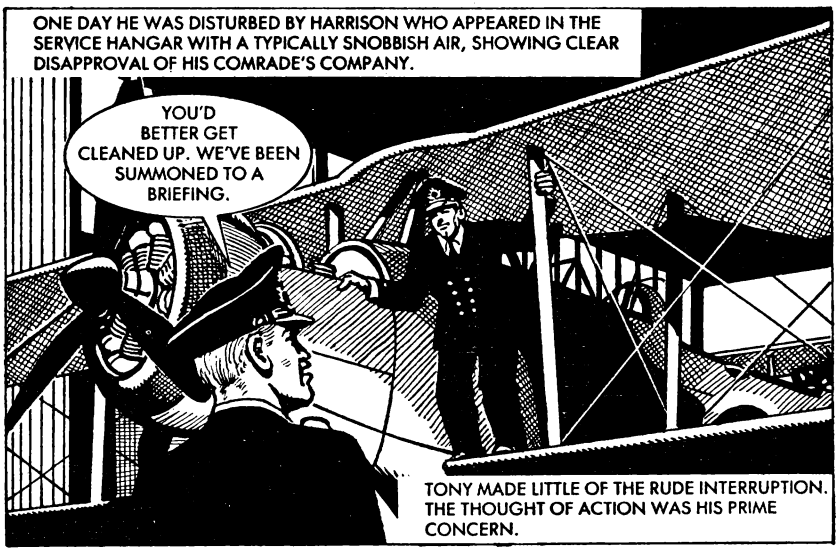

THE PLANE OUT OF CONTROL, THE GROUND RUSHED UP TOWARDS THEM. BEFORE ANYONE COULD BALE OUT, THE STRINGBAG DISINTEGRATED IN A BALL OF FLAME AND FLYING DEBRIS.
AAAAGH!


TONY WAS THE FIRST TO FLY PAST THE BLAZING WRECKAGE. HE SCANNED THE SCENE, HOPING TO SPOT ANY SIGNS OF LIFE. THERE WERE NONE.
CHARLIE'S DEAD? I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
YOU'D BETTER. NO ONE COULD POSSIBLY LIVE THROUGH THAT BONFIRE.
THE OBSERVER'S WORDS WERE HARSH BUT TRUE.

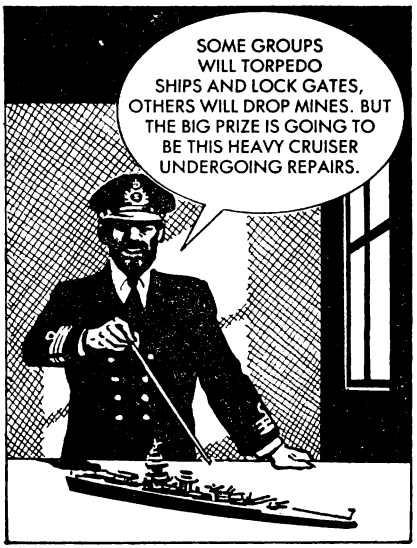

THE EXERCISE WAS CANCELLED THERE AND THEN. IT WAS A STUNNED GROUP WHO LANDED AT BASE SOME TIME LATER. TONY FELT THE LOSS MORE DEEPLY THAN ANYONE.
HE WAS THE BEST PAL I EVER HAD AND NOW HE'S GONE.
HARD LUCK, I SUPPOSE. BUT HE MUST HAVE BEEN DOING WELL OVER TWO HUNDRED KNOTS. HE WAS ASKING FOR TROUBLE.

THIS TIME HARRISON HAD OPENED HIS MOUTH ONCE TOO OFTEN FOR TONY'S LIKING.
WHY, YOU RAT!
KNOCK IT OFF—WE'VE HAD ENOUGH TROUBLE ALREADY. TONY, COME TO MY OFFICE.
THE LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER SHEPHERDED TONY AWAY AT ONCE.
SETTLE DOWN, I'M ONLY GOING TO GIVE YOU A WARNING.
THANKS, SKIPPER. I'VE HAD A BELLYFUL OF THAT ARROGANT OAF!
BUT PAUL KNEW THAT CHARLIE'S DEATH WAS THE REAL CAUSE OF THIS ANGER. HE TRIED TO COOL THINGS DOWN.
I FEEL AS BADLY AS YOU, BUT TEARING INTO A RAGE WON'T CHANGE ANYTHING, SO PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.
YOU'RE RIGHT . . . I'LL APOLOGISE TO HARRISON.
THE WAR STILL HAD TO BE FOUGHT. AT THE END OF THE DAY, TONY KNEW THAT HIS PARTNER WAS A GOOD OBSERVER IF LITTLE ELSE.

IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, AN UNEASY PEACE REIGNED BETWEEN TONY AND HARRISON. THE PILOT SPENT MUCH OF HIS SPARE TIME WITH THE MECHANICS STUDYING HIS FAVOURITE HOBBY—ENGINES.
THESE SWORDFISH MOTORS WON'T GIVE YOU A HIGH CRUISING SPEED, SIR, BUT THEY'RE VERY RELIABLE.


ONE DAY HE WAS DISTURBED BY HARRISON WHO APPEARED IN THE SERVICE HANGAR WITH A TYPICALLY SNOBBISH AIR, SHOWING CLEAR DISAPPROVAL OF HIS COMRADE'S COMPANY.
YOU'D BETTER GET CLEANED UP. WE'VE BEEN SUMMONED TO A BRIEFING.
TONY MADE LITTLE OF THE RUDE INTERRUPTION. THE THOUGHT OF ACTION WAS HIS PRIME CONCERN.

HE WAS SCRUBBED UP AND IN THE BRIEFING ROOM WITHIN MINUTES. FOR WEEKS THEY HAD BEEN STUDYING A MODEL OF AN ENEMY PORT—NOW THE PURPOSE WAS ABOUT TO BE REVEALED.
YOU SHOULD KNOW EVERY PATCH OF SEAWEED IN THIS GERMAN HARBOUR BY NOW. WELL, YOU'D BETTER, BECAUSE WE'RE ATTACKING TONIGHT
AT LAST! THE MOMENT WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR.
PAUL QUICKLY GOT DOWN TO DETAILS. THE SQUADRON WAS TO BE SPLIT UP IN ORDER TO ASSAULT DIFFERENT TARGETS.

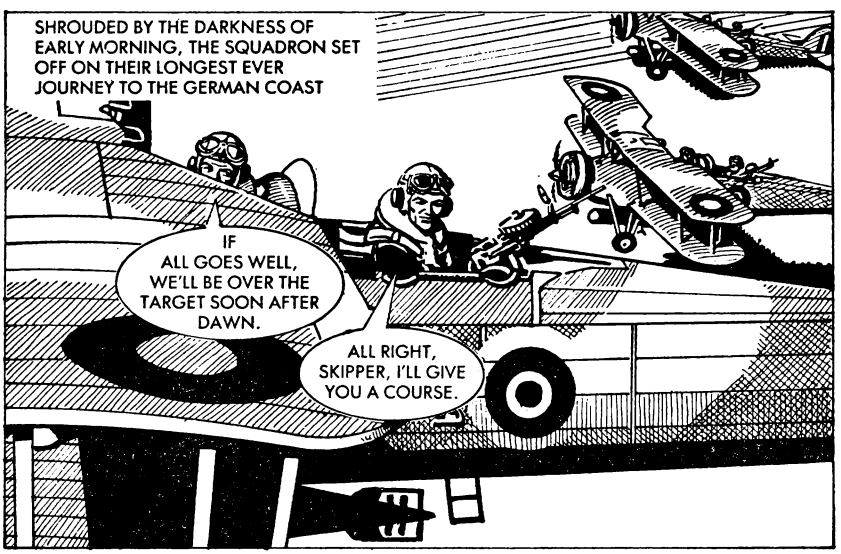

SOME GROUPS WILL TORPEDO SHIPS AND LOCK GATES, OTHERS WILL DROP MINES. BUT THE BIG PRIZE IS GOING TO BE THIS HEAVY CRUISER UNDERGOING REPAIRS.

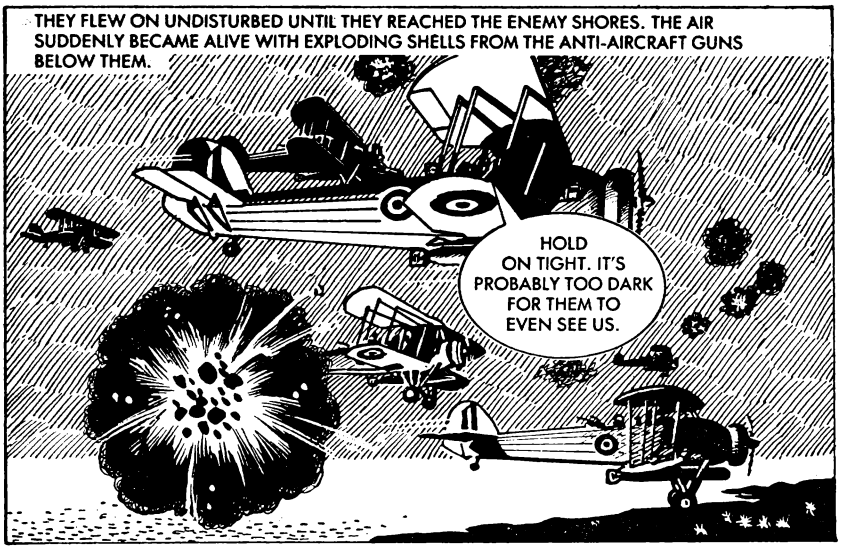
THE LARGE VESSEL HAD BEEN SAVAGING ALLIED CONVOYS. IT HAD TO BE SUNK AT ALL COSTS
I'LL LEAD THE ATTACK ON THIS HULK WITH STANNING, CROCKER AND THOMSON.
14

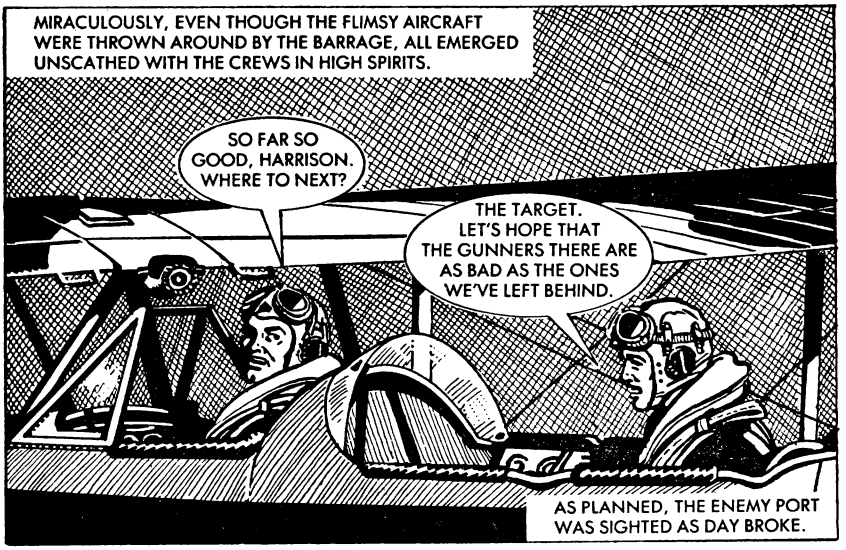
THE LECTURE COMPLETE, QUESTIONS FIRED IN THICK AND FAST AT THE LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER.
WHY CAN'T THE R.A.F. HANDLE THIS JOB?
BECAUSE INTELLIGENCE REPORTS, SCANT AS THEY ARE, RECKON THE DEFENCES ARE DESIGNED TO DEAL WITH HIGH LEVEL RAIDS ONLY.
THAT MADE SENSE. ALL KNEW THE SWORDFISH UNIT OPERATED BEST IN LOW LEVELS ATTACKS.

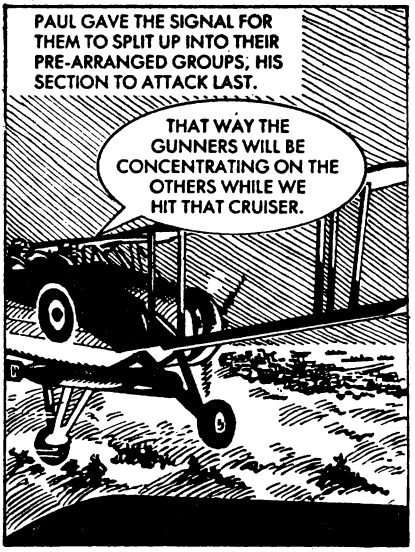
AS SOON AS THE BRIEFING WAS OVER, THE CREWS DASHED OUT TO GET THEIR FLYING GEAR. WITH HARRISON EVEN IN A PLEASANT MOOD, TONY WONDERED WHY.
YOU'D THINK THERE WAS A GOLD RUSH ON.
THERE IS FOR ME. UNTIL I DO SOMETHING REALLY WORTHWHILE, I'M OUT OF THE FAMILY WILL.

THE COLD-BLOODED OBSERVER FELT SURE THAT THE COMING RAID WOULD CLINCH A SHARE OF HIS FATHER'S VAST FORTUNE, A SELFISH ATTITUDE WHICH DISGUSTED TONY.
I'M FIGHTING FOR MY DAD'S SAKE AS WELL, BUT NOT MERELY TO WIN FAVOUR.
BIG DEAL. NOW ARE YOU COMING OR NOT?
COMMON DECENCY WAS WASTED ON A BLOKE LIKE HARRISON.

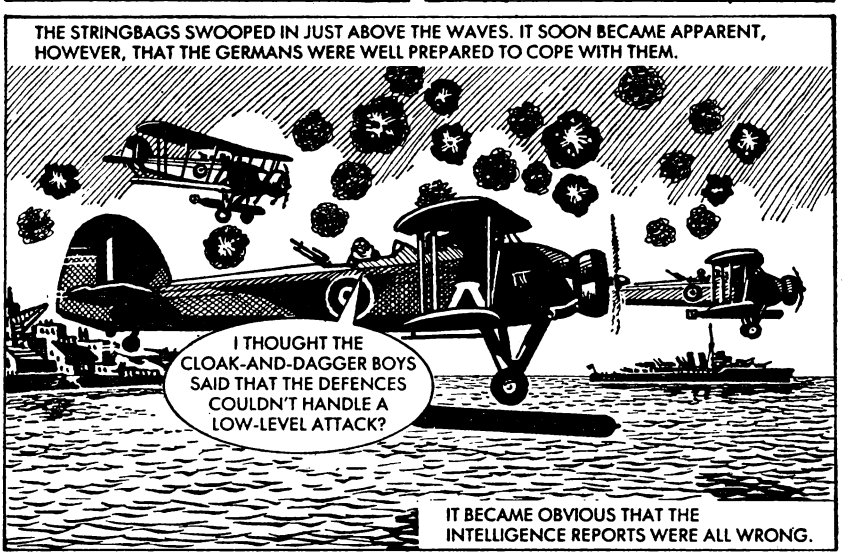

SHROUDED BY THE DARKNESS OF EARLY MORNING, THE SQUADRON SET OFF ON THEIR LONGEST EVER JOURNEY TO THE GERMAN COAST
IF ALL GOES WELL, WE'LL BE OVER THE TARGET SOON AFTER DAWN.
ALL RIGHT, SKIPPER, I'LL GIVE YOU A COURSE.


THEY FLEW ON UNDISTURBED UNTIL THEY REACHED THE ENEMY SHORES. THE AIR SUDDENLY BECAME ALIVE WITH EXPLODING SHELLS FROM THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS BELOW THEM.
HOLD ON TIGHT. IT'S PROBABLY TOO DARK FOR THEM TO EVEN SEE US.


MIRACULOUSLY, EVEN THOUGH THE FLIMSY AIRCRAFT WERE THROWN AROUND BY THE BARRAGE, ALL EMERGED UNSCATHED WITH THE CREWS IN HIGH SPIRITS.
SO FAR SO GOOD, HARRISON. WHERE TO NEXT?
THE TARGET. LET'S HOPE THAT THE GUNNERS THERE ARE AS BAD AS THE ONES WE'VE LEFT BEHIND.
AS PLANNED, THE ENEMY PORT WAS SIGHTED AS DAY BROKE.

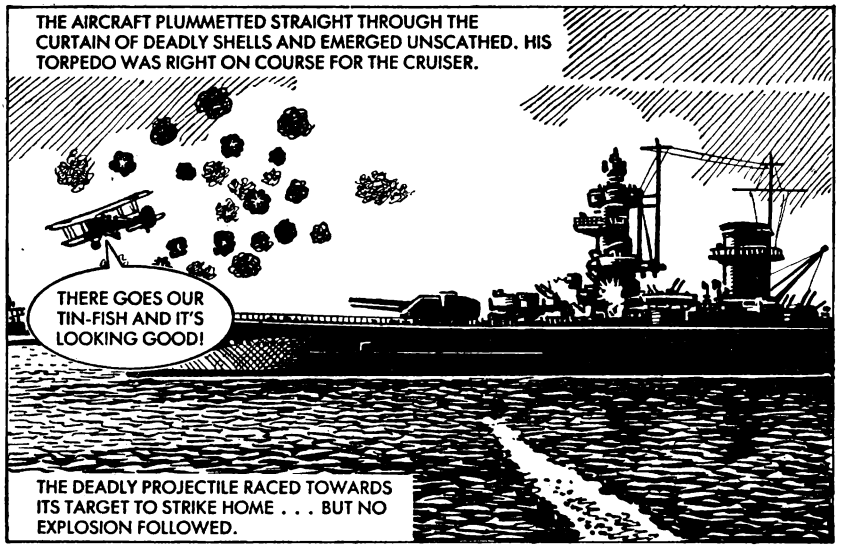

PAUL GAVE THE SIGNAL FOR THEM TO SPLIT UP INTO THEIR PRE-ARRANGED GROUPS; HIS SECTION TO ATTACK LAST.
THAT WAY THE GUNNERS WILL BE CONCENTRATING ON THE OTHERS WHILE WE HIT THAT CRUISER.

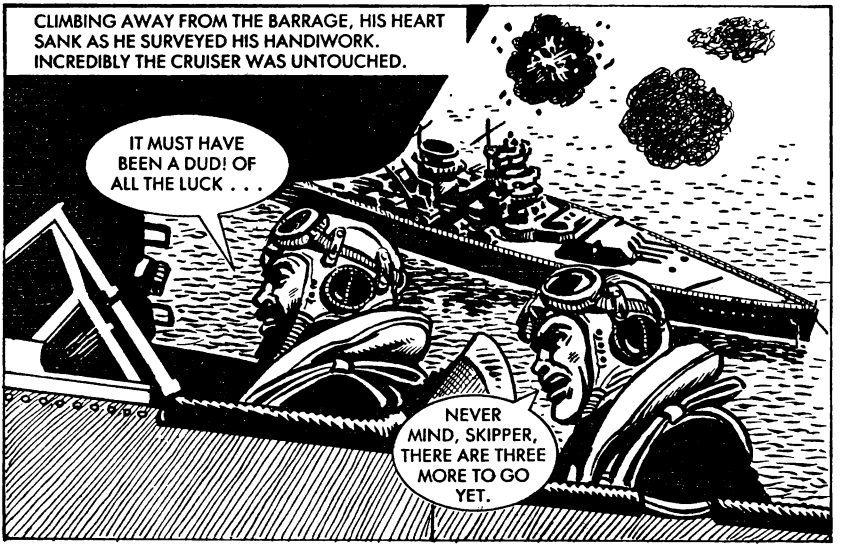
AS THE RAIDERS NEARED THE HARBOUR, THE ENEMY DEFENCES CAME TO LIFE.
ACH! DO THE ENGLANDERS NEVER SLEEP?

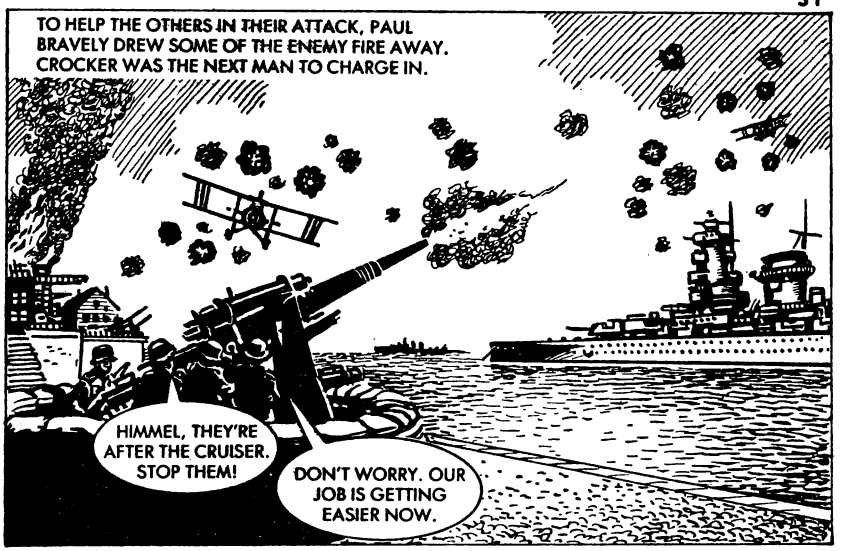

THE STRINGBAGS SWOOPED IN JUST ABOVE THE WAVES. IT SOON BECAME APPARENT, HOWEVER, THAT THE GERMANS WERE WELL PREPARED TO COPE WITH THEM.
I THOUGHT THE CLOAK-AND-DAGGER BOYS SAID THAT THE DEFENCES COULDN'T HANDLE A LOW-LEVEL ATTACK?
IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT THE INTELLIGENCE REPORTS WERE ALL WRONG.

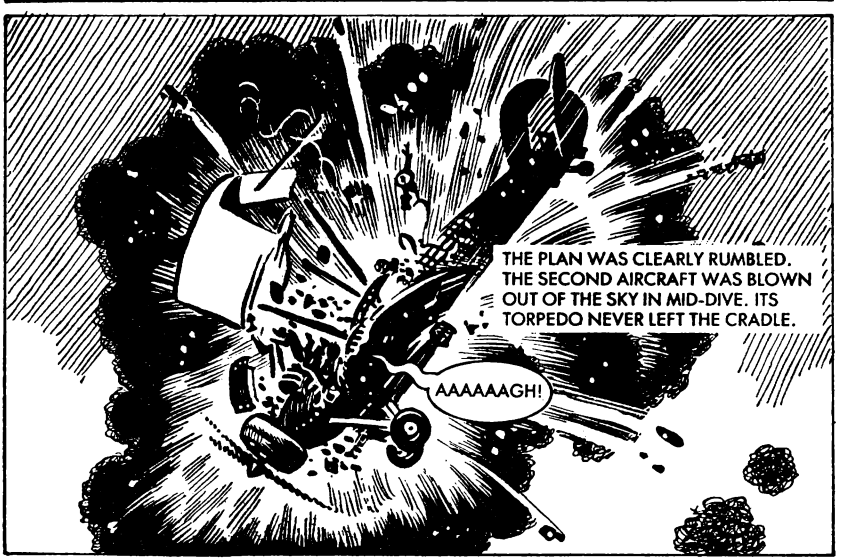
ALTHOUGH SOME OF THEIR TORPEDOES STRUCK HOME, IT WAS ONLY AT GREAT COST AS THE GUNS BELOW BELCHED FIRE.
AAAAAGH! WE'RE HIT

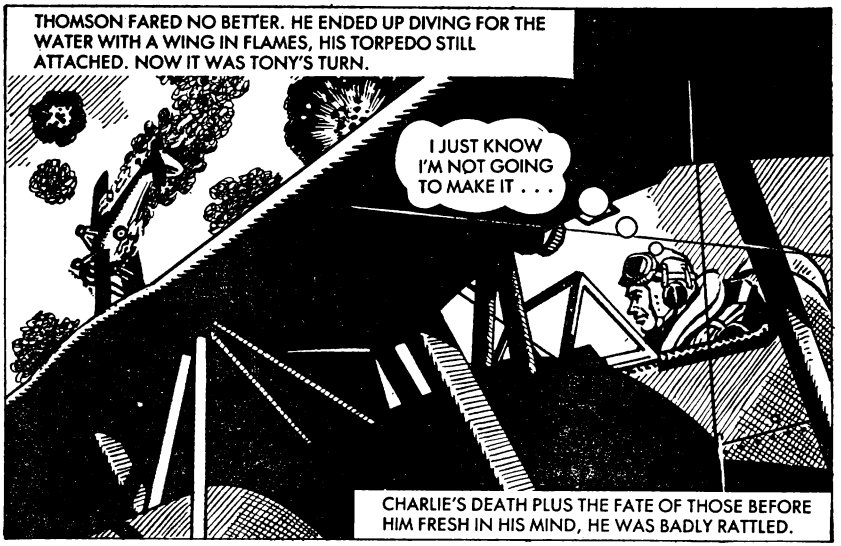
SEEING THE REST OF HIS SQUADRON IN DESPERATE TROUBLE, PAUL GRITTED HIS TEETH. HE STARTED HIS OWN DIVE, THE FLAK CLIMBING UP TO MEET HIM.
WE'LL GET THAT SHIP. NOTHING ELSE MATTERS NOW.


THE AIRCRAFT PLUMMETTED STRAIGHT THROUGH THE CURTAIN OF DEADLY SHELLS AND EMERGED UNSCATHED. HIS TORPEDO WAS RIGHT ON COURSE FOR THE CRUISER.
THERE GOES OUR TIN-FISH AND IT'S LOOKING GOOD!
THE DEADLY PROJECTILE RACED TOWARDS ITS TARGET TO STRIKE HOME . . . BUT NO EXPLOSION FOLLOWED.

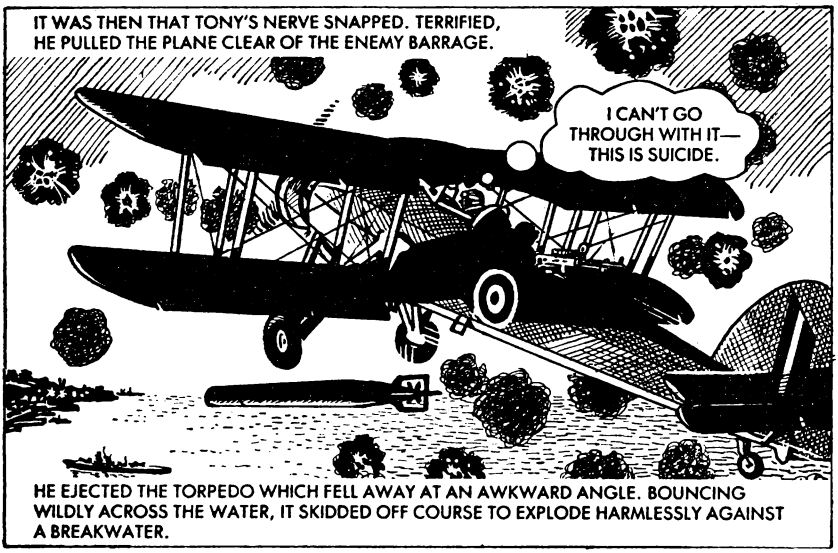

CLIMBING AWAY FROM THE BARRAGE, HIS HEART SANK AS HE SURVEYED HIS HANDIWORK. INCREDIBLY THE CRUISER WAS UNTOUCHED.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A DUD! OF ALL THE LUCK . . .
NEVER MIND, SKIPPER, THERE ARE THREE MORE TO GO YET.

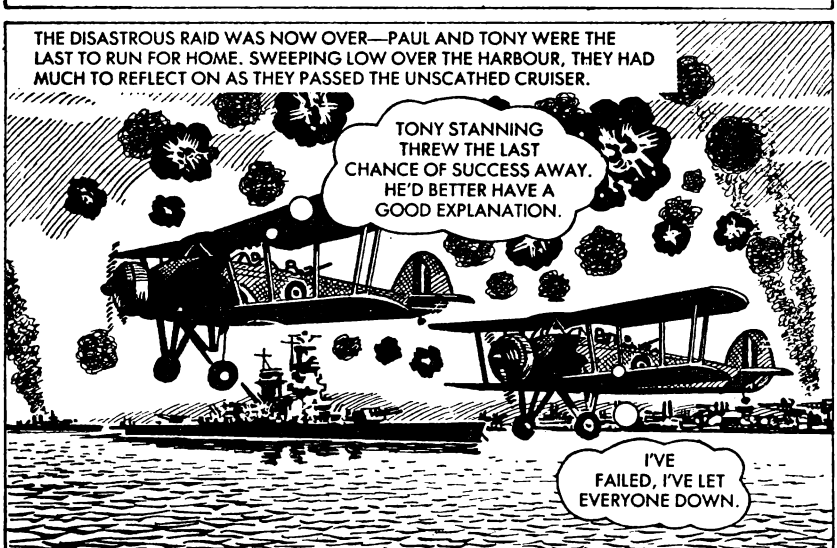

TO HELP THE OTHERS IN THEIR ATTACK, PAUL BRAVELY DREW SOME OF THE ENEMY FIRE AWAY. CROCKER WAS THE NEXT MAN TO CHARGE IN.
HIMMEL, THEY'RE AFTER THE CRUISER. STOP THEM!
DON'T WORRY. OUR JOB IS GETTING EASIER NOW.

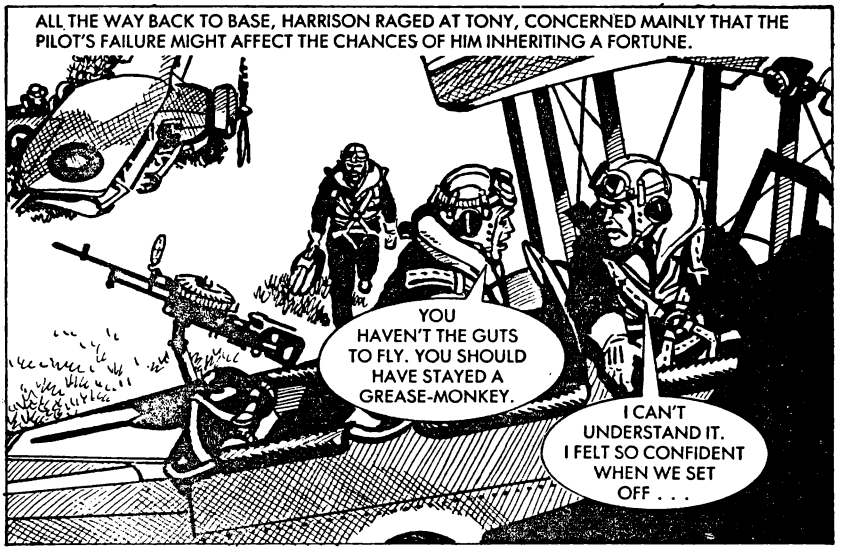

THE PLAN WAS CLEARLY RUMBLED. THE SECOND AIRCRAFT WAS BLOWN OUT OF THE SKY IN MID-DIVE. ITS TORPEDO NEVER LEFT THE CRADLE.
AAAAAAGH!

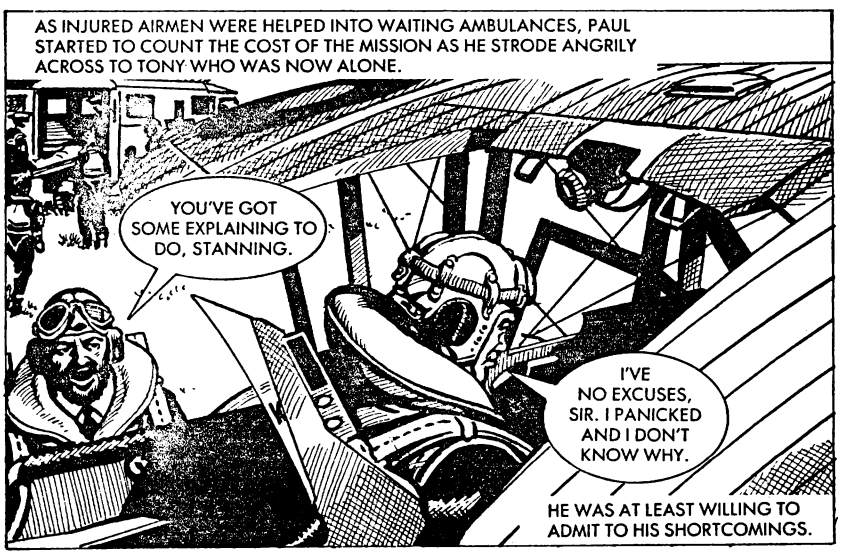

THOMSON FARED NO BETTER. HE ENDED UP DIVING FOR THE WATER WITH A WING IN FLAMES, HIS TORPEDO STILL ATTACHED. NOW IT WAS TONY'S TURN.
I JUST KNOW I'M NOT GOING TO MAKE IT . . .
CHARLIE'S DEATH PLUS THE FATE OF THOSE BEFORE HIM FRESH IN HIS MIND, HE WAS BADLY RATTLED.

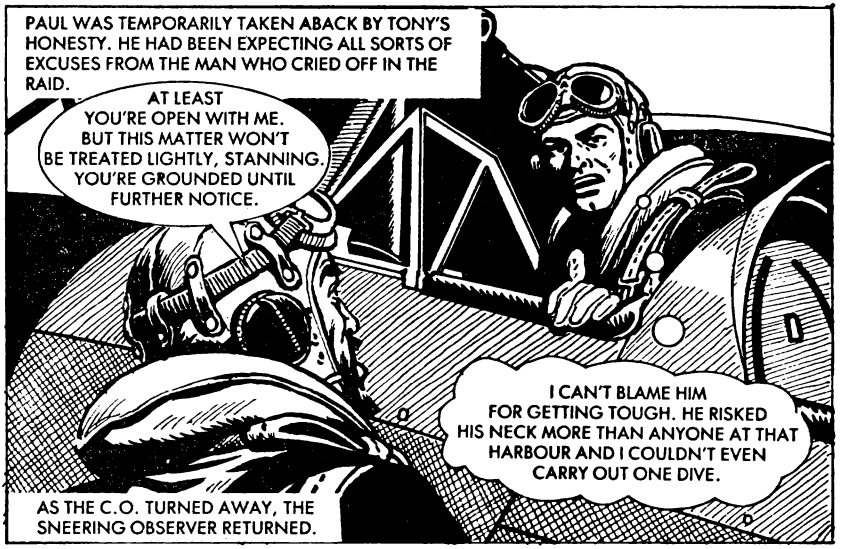
HE FORCED HIMSELF TO THROW THE SWORDFISH INTO ITS DIVE. SOON THE SHELLS BEGAN ROARING IN.
THEY'VE GOT OUR RANGE ALREADY. WE'VE HAD IT.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? IGNORE THE FIRE-WORKS . . .
IN THE BACK, HARRISON SPOKE COLDLY. IF HE FELT ANY FEAR, HE WAS CONCEALING IT WELL.


IT WAS THEN THAT TONY'S NERVE SNAPPED. TERRIFIED, HE PULLED THE PLANE CLEAR OF THE ENEMY BARRAGE.
I CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT— THIS IS SUICIDE.
HE EJECTED THE TORPEDO WHICH FELL AWAY AT AN AWKWARD ANGLE. BOUNCING WILDLY ACROSS THE WATER, IT SKIDDED OFF COURSE TO EXPLODE HARMLESSLY AGAINST A BREAKWATER.

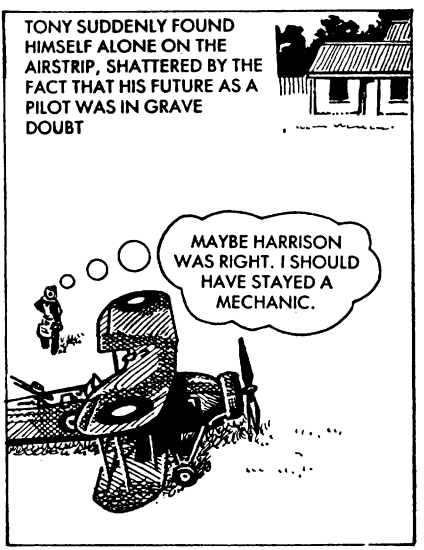

THE DISASTROUS RAID WAS NOW OVER—PAUL AND TONY WERE THE LAST TO RUN FOR HOME. SWEEPING LOW OVER THE HARBOUR, THEY HAD MUCH TO REFLECT ON AS THEY PASSED THE UNSCATHED CRUISER.
TONY STANNING THREW THE LAST CHANCE OF SUCCESS AWAY. HE'D BETTER HAVE A GOOD EXPLANATION.
I'VE FAILED, I'VE LET EVERYONE DOWN.


ALL THE WAY BACK TO BASE, HARRISON RAGED AT TONY, CONCERNED MAINLY THAT THE PILOT'S FAILURE MIGHT AFFECT THE CHANCES OF HIM INHERITING A FORTUNE.
YOU HAVEN'T THE GUTS TO FLY. YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED A GREASE-MONKEY.
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT. I FELT SO CONFIDENT WHEN WE SET OFF . . .


AS INJURED AIRMEN WERE HELPED INTO WAITING AMBULANCES, PAUL STARTED TO COUNT THE COST OF THE MISSION AS HE STRODE ANGRILY ACROSS TO TONY WHO WAS NOW ALONE.
YOU'VE GOT SOME EXPLAINING TO DO, STANNING.
I'VE NO EXCUSES, SIR. I PANICKED AND I DON'T KNOW WHY.
HE WAS AT LEAST WILLING TO ADMIT TO HIS SHORTCOMINGS.


PAUL WAS TEMPORARILY TAKEN ABACK BY TONY'S HONESTY. HE HAD BEEN EXPECTING ALL SORTS OF EXCUSES FROM THE MAN WHO CRIED OFF IN THE RAID.
AT LEAST YOU'RE OPEN WITH ME. BUT THIS MATTER WON'T BE TREATED LIGHTLY, STANNING. YOU'RE GROUNDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.
I CAN'T BLAME HIM FOR GETTING TOUGH. HE RISKED HIS NECK MORE THAN ANYONE AT THAT HARBOUR AND I COULDN'T EVEN CARRY OUT ONE DIVE.
AS THE C.O. TURNED AWAY, THE SNEERING OBSERVER RETURNED.

THE WHOLE EPISODE WAS FOOD FOR HARRISON'S SELFISH MIND.
IT BEATS ME HOW SOMEONE LIKE YOU EVER GOT INTO THE SERVICE IN THE FIRST PLACE.
I ENLISTED, YOU IDIOT.


TONY SUDDENLY FOUND HIMSELF ALONE ON THE AIRSTRIP, SHATTERED BY THE FACT THAT HIS FUTURE AS A PILOT WAS IN GRAVE DOUBT
MAYBE HARRISON WAS RIGHT. I SHOULD HAVE STAYED A MECHANIC.

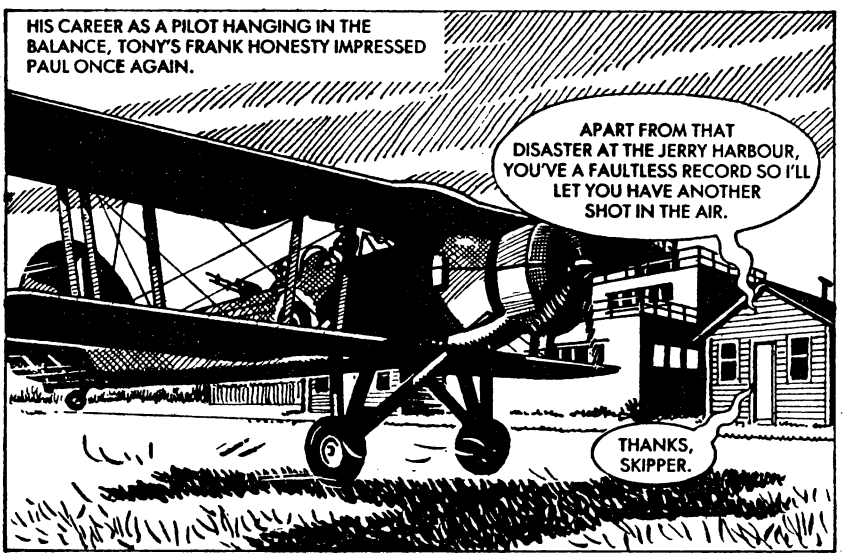
IN THE FRUSTRATING WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, HE CONSOLED HIMSELF BY WORKING ALONGSIDE THE FITTERS. SOON HE KNEW EVERY NUT AND BOLT AND PRECISELY WHERE EVERYTHING FITTED.
THEY MAY SEEM A BIT OF A JIGSAW AT FIRST, SIR, BUT YOU SOON GET TO KNOW THEM.
THANKS TO YOU, CARTER. YOU'RE A GOOD INSTRUCTOR.

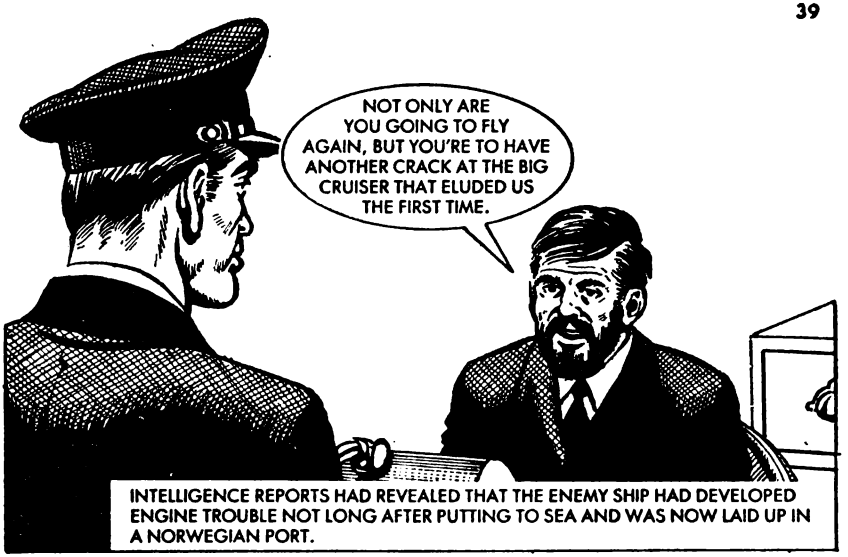
TONY'S LOVE OF PRACTICAL ENGINEERING OFTEN MADE HIM LOSE ALL TRACK OF TIME. ONE DAY HE FOUND HIMSELF OVERDUE FOR A MEETING WITH PAUL.
CRIPES, I'D BETTER GET GOING. I'M IN ENOUGH TROUBLE WITH HIM AS IT IS.
SEE YOU SAME TIME TOMORROW THEN, SIR?

IT WAS TO BE AN IMPORTANT APPOINTMENT, FOR HE WAS TO FIND OUT IF HE WOULD BE CHARGED FOR HIS FAILURE IN THE RAID. ANXIOUSLY HE SPRINTED TO GET CLEANED UP.
BLIMEY! WHAT RACE ARE YOU ENTERED FOR?
APART FROM HARRISON NONE OF THE OTHER AIRMEN IN THE SQUADRON BORE HIM ANY MALICE. INDEED, THEY WISHED HIM LUCK AT HIS HEARING.

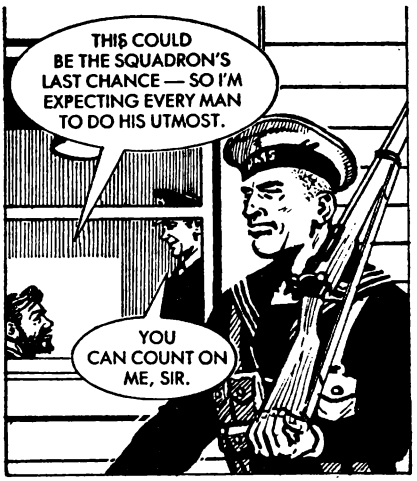
AFTER CLEANING UP, HE ARRIVED AT PAUL'S OFFICE IN THE NICK OF TIME.
AH, COME IN, STANNING.
HE SOUNDS CHEERFUL ENOUGH. MAYBE HE'S GOT GOOD NEWS.

HE DID NOT EXPECT MUCH IN THE WAY OF LENIENCY SO HE WAS CAREFUL NOT TO RAISE ANY HOPES TOO SOON. PAUL CAME STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.

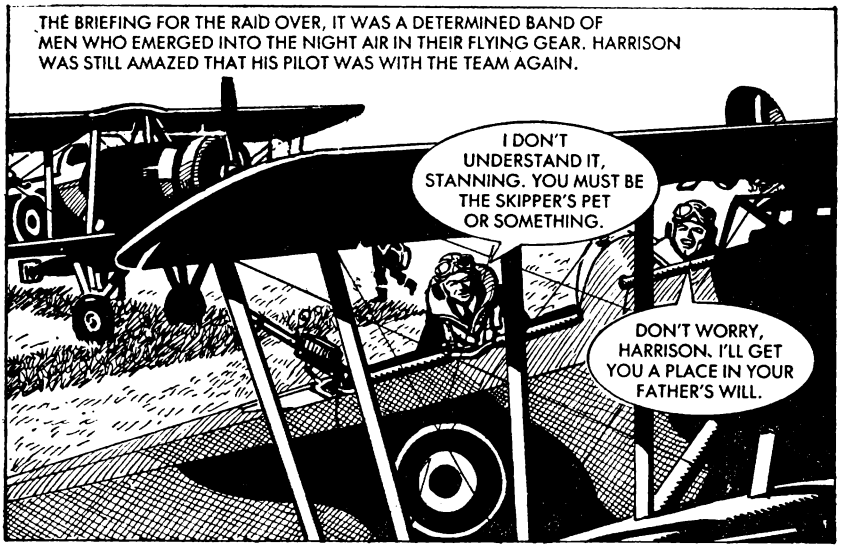


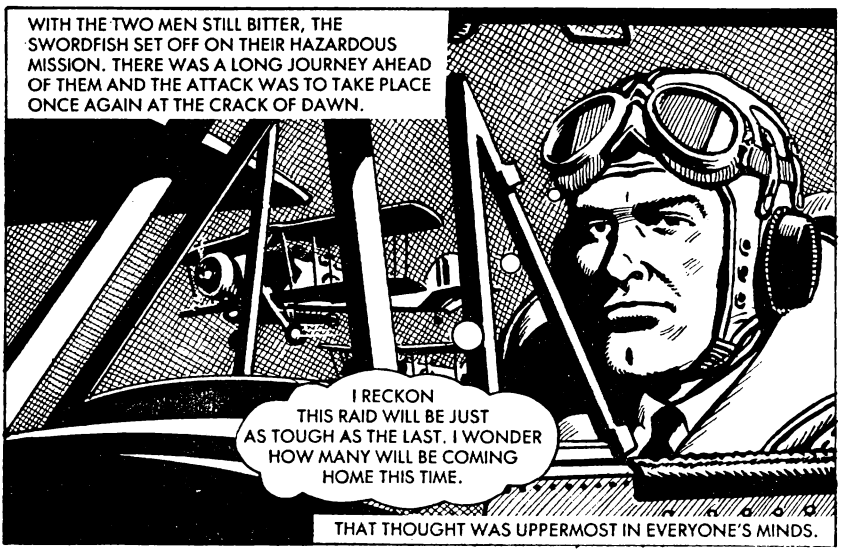


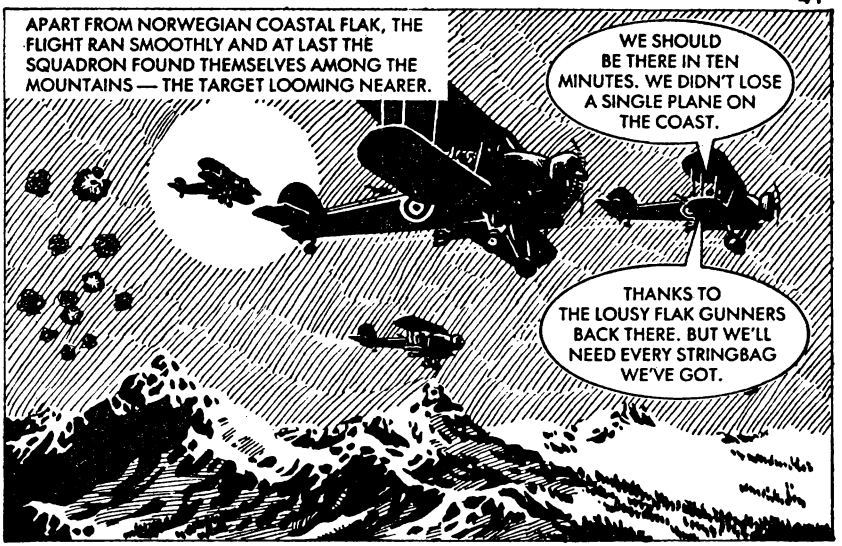
ALTHOUGH HE WAS SURE HE HAD MADE THE RIGHT DECISION, PAUL WARNED TONY NOT TO CRY OFF AGAIN WHATEVER THE COST.

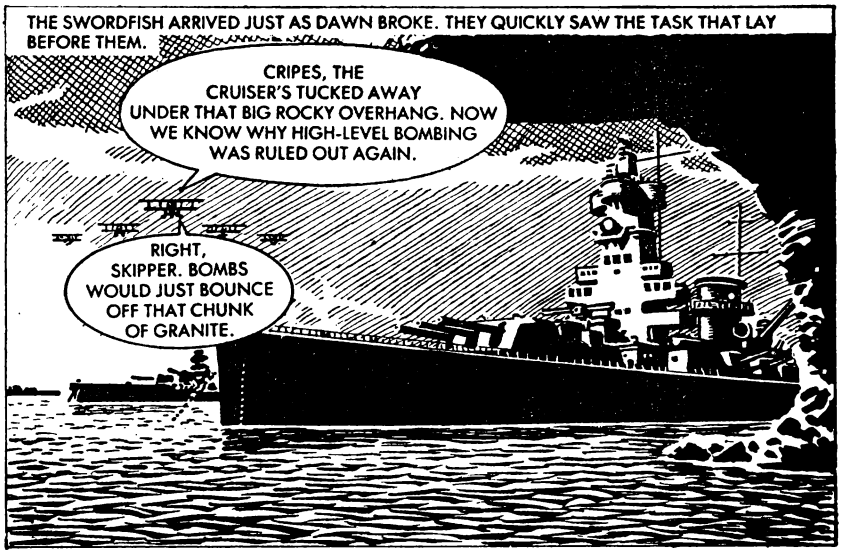


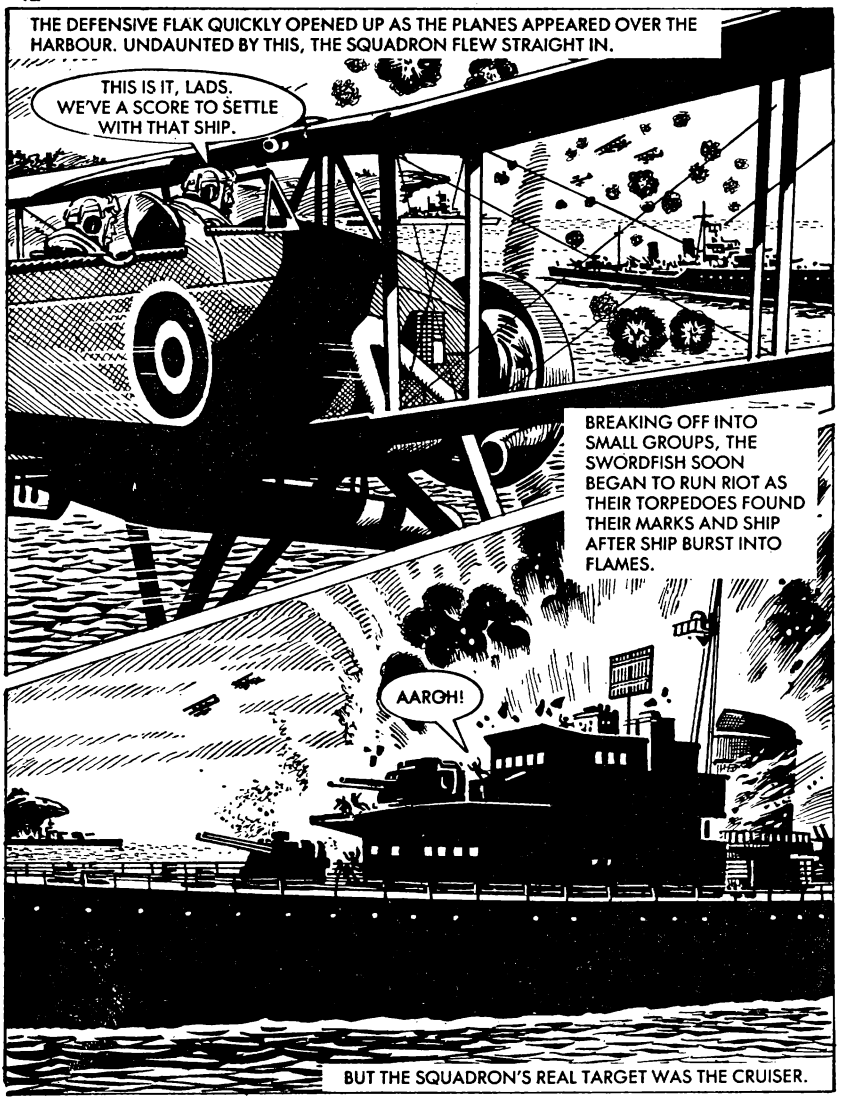
THE MATTER SETTLED, THE TWO PILOTS SET OFF FOR AN URGENT BRIEFING. THE RAID WAS TO TAKE PLACE THAT VERY NIGHT.

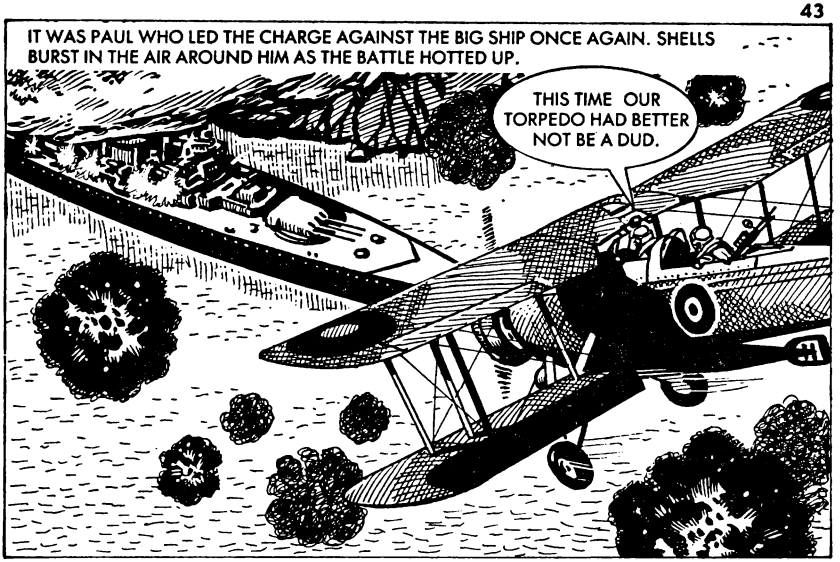

THE BRIEFING FOR THE RAID OVER, IT WAS A DETERMINED BAND OF MEN WHO EMERGED INTO THE NIGHT AIR IN THEIR FLYING GEAR. HARRISON WAS STILL AMAZED THAT HIS PILOT WAS WITH THE TEAM AGAIN.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, STANNING. YOU MUST BE THE SKIPPER'S PET OR SOMETHING.
DON'T WORRY, HARRISON. I'LL GET YOU A PLACE IN YOUR FATHER'S WILL.

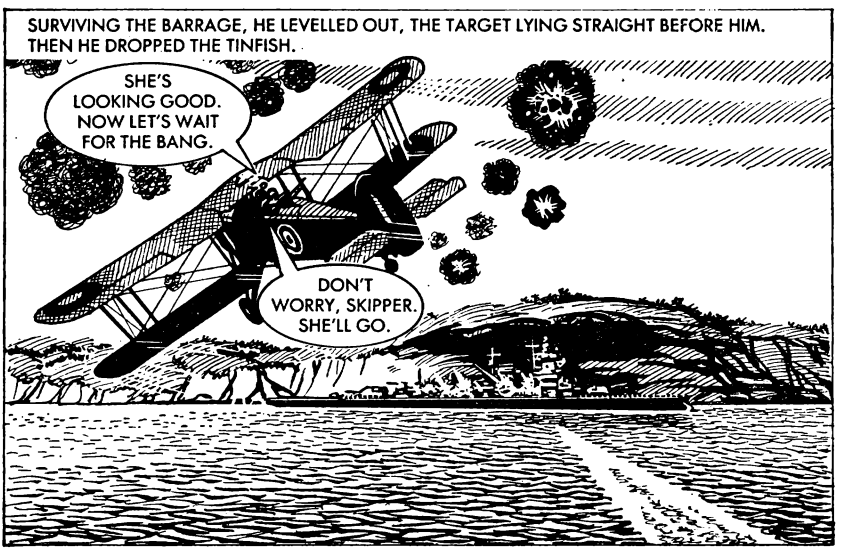

WITH THE TWO MEN STILL BITTER, THE SWORDFISH SET OFF ON THEIR HAZARDOUS MISSION. THERE WAS A LONG JOURNEY AHEAD OF THEM AND THE ATTACK WAS TO TAKE PLACE ONCE AGAIN AT THE CRACK OF DAWN.
I RECKON THIS RAID WILL BE JUST AS TOUGH AS THE LAST. I WONDER HOW MANY WILL BE COMING HOME THIS TIME.
THAT THOUGHT WAS UPPERMOST IN EVERYONE'S MINDS.

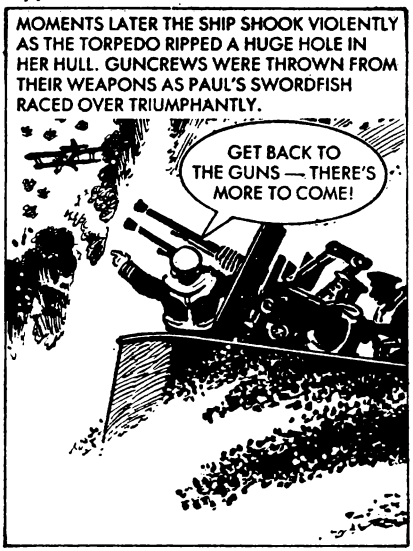

APART FROM NORWEGIAN COASTAL FLAK, THE FLIGHT RAN SMOOTHLY AND AT LAST THE SQUADRON FOUND THEMSELVES AMONG THE MOUNTAINS — THE TARGET LOOMING NEARER.
WE SHOULD BE THERE IN TEN MINUTES. WE DIDN'T LOSE A SINGLE PLANE ON THE COAST.
THANKS TO THE LOUSY FLAK GUNNERS BACK THERE. BUT WE'LL NEED EVERY STRINGBAG WE'VE GOT.

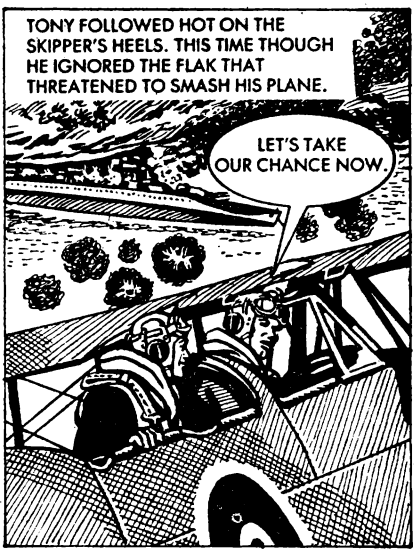

THE SWORDFISH ARRIVED JUST AS DAWN BROKE. THEY QUICKLY SAW THE TASK THAT LAY BEFORE THEM.
CRIPES, THE CRUISER'S TUCKED AWAY UNDER THAT BIG ROCKY OVERHANG. NOW WE KNOW WHY HIGH-LEVEL BOMBING WAS RULED OUT AGAIN.
RIGHT, SKIPPER. BOMBS WOULD JUST BOUNCE OFF THAT CHUNK OF GRANITE.

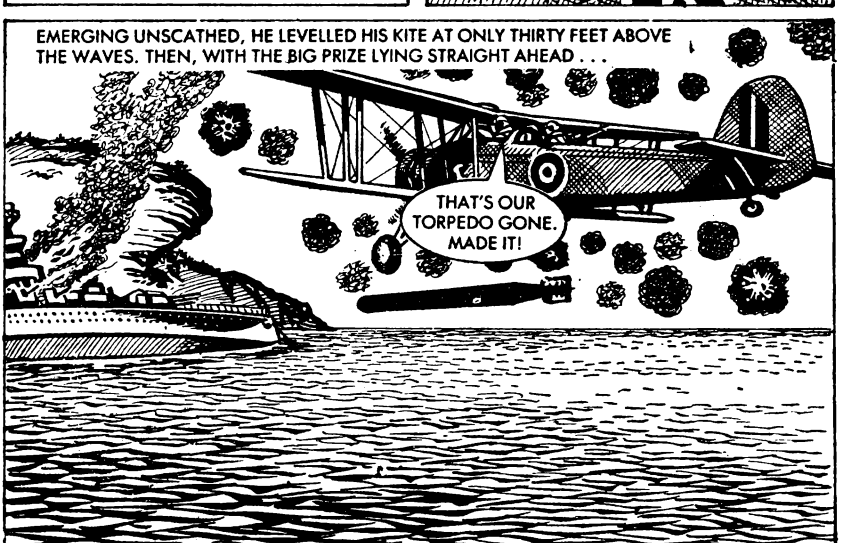

THE DEFENSIVE FLAK QUICKLY OPENED UP AS THE PLANES APPEARED OVER THE HARBOUR. UNDAUNTED BY THIS, THE SQUADRON FLEW STRAIGHT IN.
THIS IS IT, LADS. WE'VE A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH THAT SHIP.
BREAKING OFF INTO SMALL GROUPS, THE SWORDFISH SOON BEGAN TO RUN RIOT AS THEIR TORPEDOES FOUND THEIR MARKS AND SHIP AFTER SHIP BURST INTO FLAMES.
AARGH!
BUT THE SQUADRON'S REAL TARGET WAS THE CRUISER.

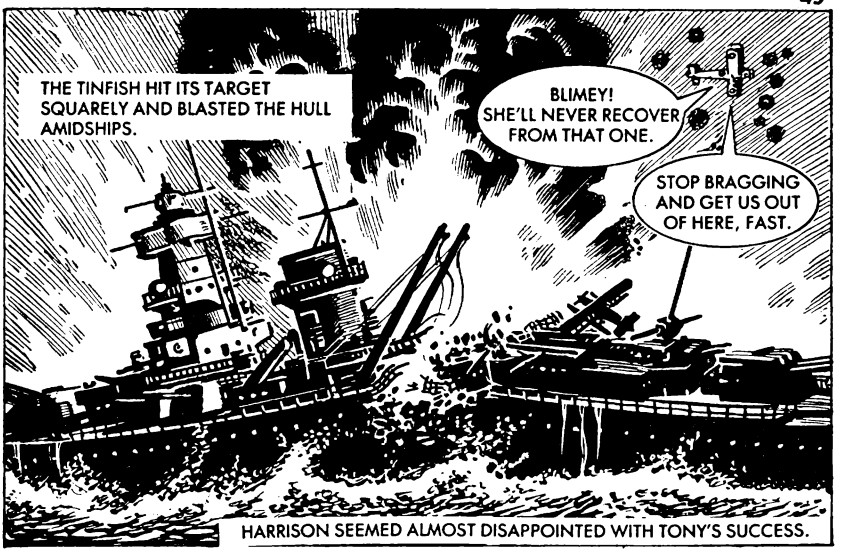

IT WAS PAUL WHO LED THE CHARGE AGAINST THE BIG SHIP ONCE AGAIN. SHELLS BURST IN THE AIR AROUND HIM AS THE BATTLE HOTTED UP.
THIS TIME OUR TORPEDO HAD BETTER NOT BE A DUD.

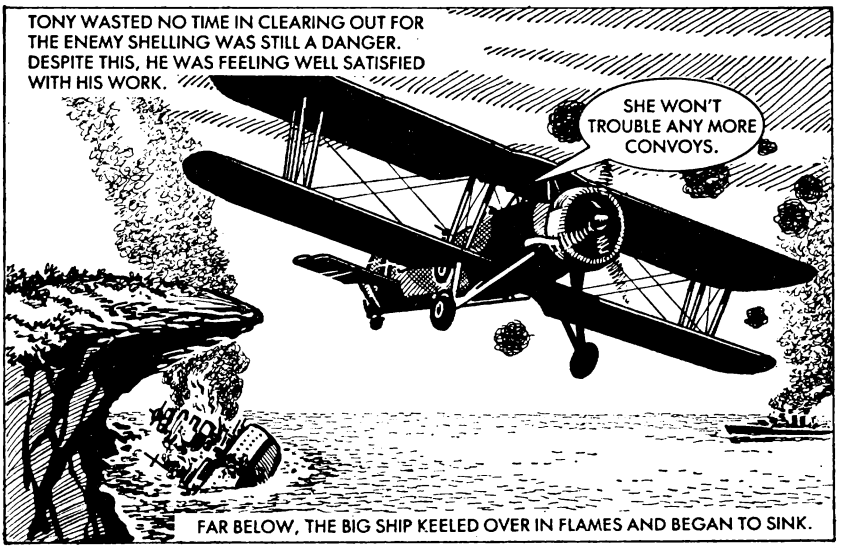

SURVIVING THE BARRAGE, HE LEVELLED OUT, THE TARGET LYING STRAIGHT BEFORE HIM. THEN HE DROPPED THE TINFISH.
SHE'S LOOKING GOOD. NOW LET'S WAIT FOR THE BANG.
DON'T WORRY, SKIPPER. SHE'LL GO.


MOMENTS LATER THE SHIP SHOOK VIOLENTLY AS THE TORPEDO RIPPED A HUGE HOLE IN HER HULL. GUNCREWS WERE THROWN FROM THEIR WEAPONS AS PAUL'S SWORDFISH RACED OVER TRIUMPHANTLY.
GET BACK TO THE GUNS — THERE'S MORE TO COME!


TONY FOLLOWED HOT ON THE SKIPPER'S HEELS. THIS TIME THOUGH HE IGNORED THE FLAK THAT THREATENED TO SMASH HIS PLANE.
LET'S TAKE OUR CHANCE NOW.


EMERGING UNSCATHED, HE LEVELLED HIS KITE AT ONLY THIRTY FEET ABOVE THE WAVES. THEN, WITH THE BIG PRIZE LYING STRAIGHT AHEAD . . .
THAT'S OUR TORPEDO GONE. MADE IT!


THE TINFISH HIT ITS TARGET SQUARELY AND BLASTED THE HULL AMIDSHIPS.
BLIMEY! SHE'LL NEVER RECOVER FROM THAT ONE.
STOP BRAGGING AND GET US OUT OF HERE, FAST.
HARRISON SEEMED ALMOST DISAPPOINTED WITH TONY'S SUCCESS.


TONY WASTED NO TIME IN CLEARING OUT FOR THE ENEMY SHELLING WAS STILL A DANGER. DESPITE THIS, HE WAS FEELING WELL SATISFIED WITH HIS WORK.
SHE WON'T TROUBLE ANY MORE CONVOYS.
FAR BELOW, THE BIG SHIP KEELED OVER IN FLAMES AND BEGAN TO SINK.

PAUL TOO WAS WELL PLEASED WITH THE SUCCESS. HE REMAINED OVER THE TARGET AREA, DRAWING ENEMY FIRE WHILE THE OTHERS GOT CLEAR. THEN, WHEN HE BANKED ROUND TO HEAD FOR HOME, DISASTER STRUCK AS A SHELL BURST CLOSE TO THE WING.

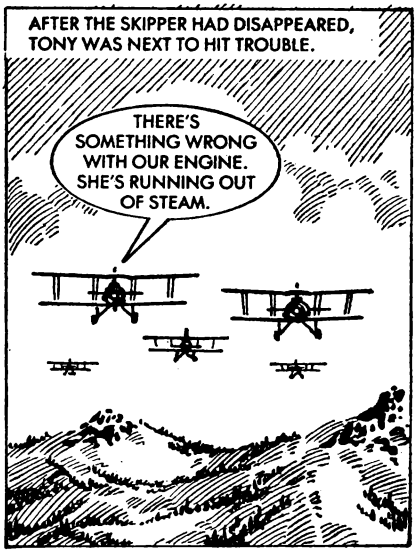
OH, NO! THE WING'S BEEN HIT.

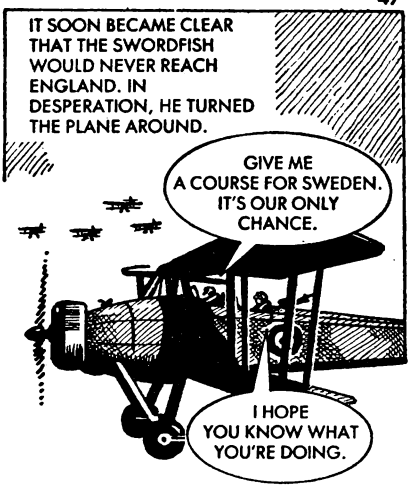
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE STOPPED A SHELL, SKIPPER.

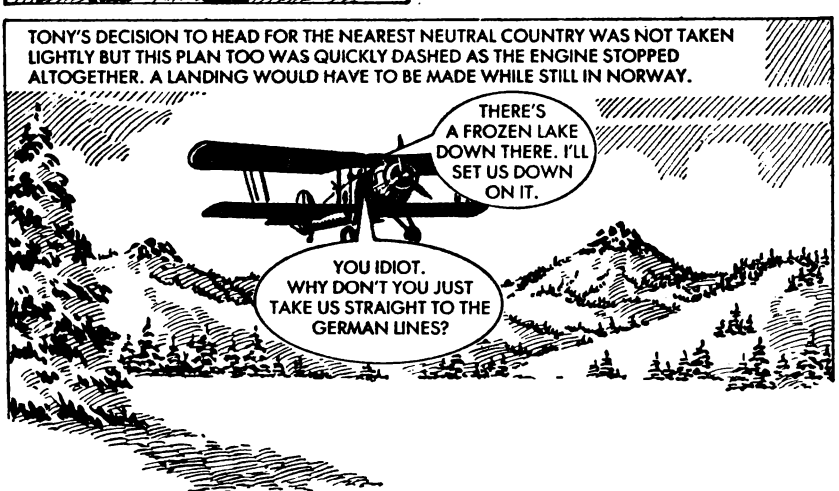
THE LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER MANAGED TO WRESTLE HIS WAY OUT OF THE HARBOUR, BUT HIS PLANE WAS TOO BADLY DAMAGED TO STAND ANY CHANCE OF GETTING VERY FAR.

WE'RE TOO LOW TO BALE OUT. PREPARE FOR A CRASH LANDING.

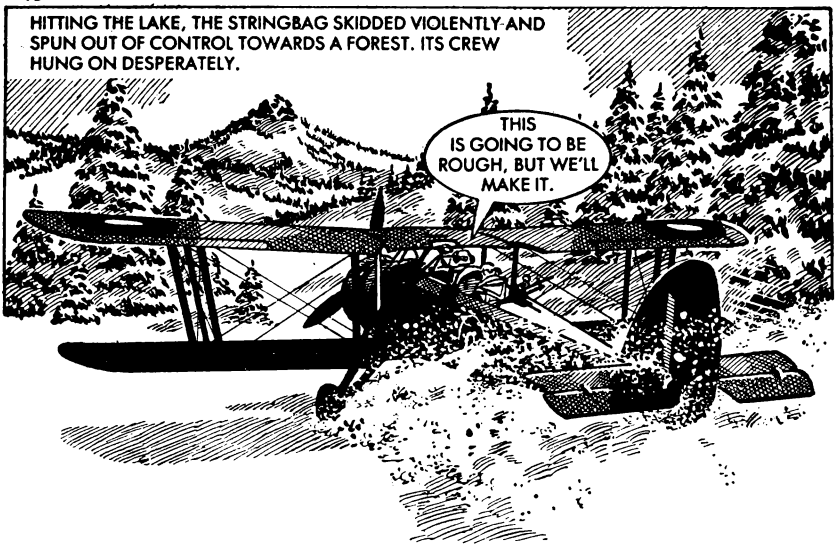
BELOW THE DOOMED AIRCRAFT, SNOW-CAPPED MOUNTAINS LOOMED MENACINGLY.



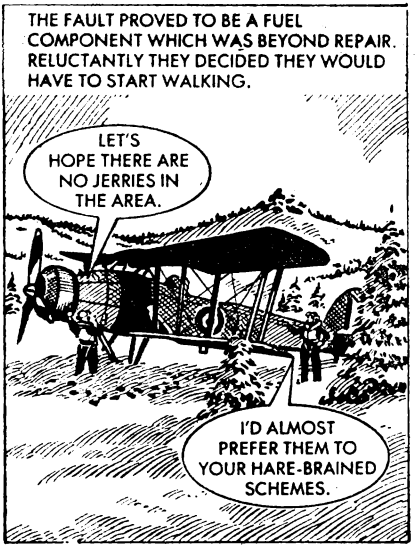




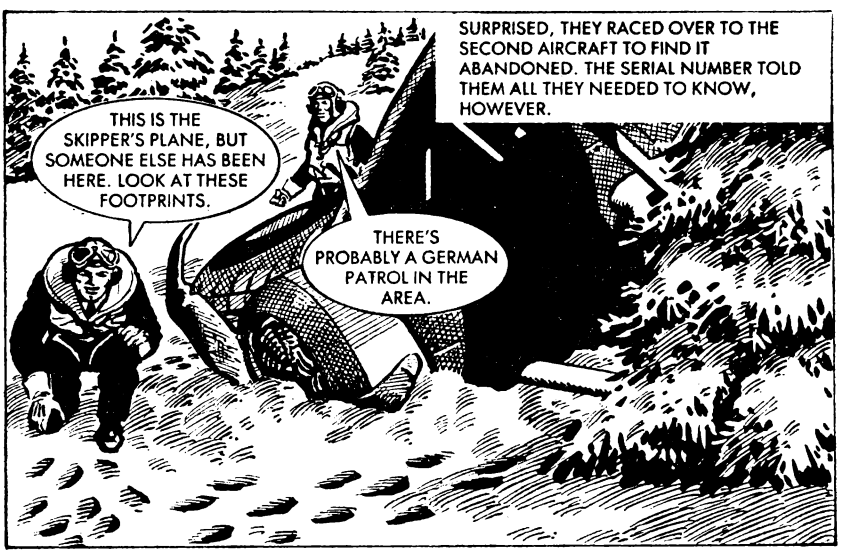
THE PILOT HAD NO TIME TO REPLY. ALREADY THE GROUND WAS RUSHING UP FAST TOWARDS HIM.


HITTING THE LAKE, THE STRINGBAG SKIDDED VIOLENTLY AND SPUN OUT OF CONTROL TOWARDS A FOREST. ITS CREW HUNG ON DESPERATELY.
THIS IS GOING TO BE ROUGH, BUT WE'LL MAKE IT.

FORTUNATELY THE SWORDFISH HELD TOGETHER AND STOPPED SHORT OF THE TREES. THE TWO MEN ESCAPED UNHURT.
NOW WE'RE IN THE SOUP. I'D BETTER TAKE A LOOK AT THE MOTOR AND SEE IF I CAN FIX IT.
ARE YOU KIDDING? THIS IS NO TIME TO BE PLAYING AT AMATEUR MECHANICS.
TONY BELIEVED THEIR BEST ESCAPE CHANCE WAS TO GET THE PLANE OPERATIONAL AGAIN, DESPITE HARRISON'S INSISTENCE THAT THEY SHOULD GET CLEAR BEFORE ANY ENEMY TROOPS SHOWED UP.


THE FAULT PROVED TO BE A FUEL COMPONENT WHICH WAS BEYOND REPAIR. RELUCTANTLY THEY DECIDED THEY WOULD HAVE TO START WALKING.
LET'S HOPE THERE ARE NO JERRIES IN THE AREA.
I'D ALMOST PREFER THEM TO YOUR HARE-BRAINED SCHEMES.

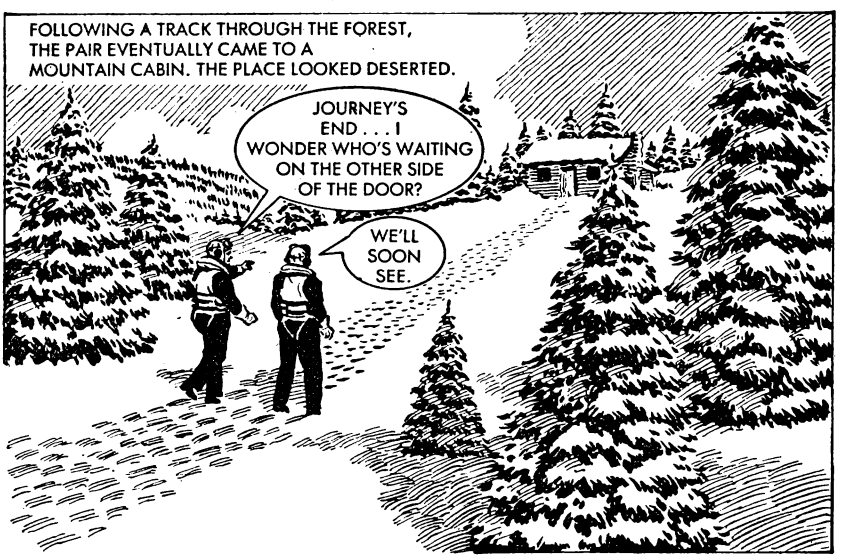
AS THE TWO MEN SET OFF, TONY POINTED TOWARDS THE TREES.
AM I SEEING THINGS OR IS THAT ANOTHER STRINGBAG?
YOU'RE RIGHT. WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

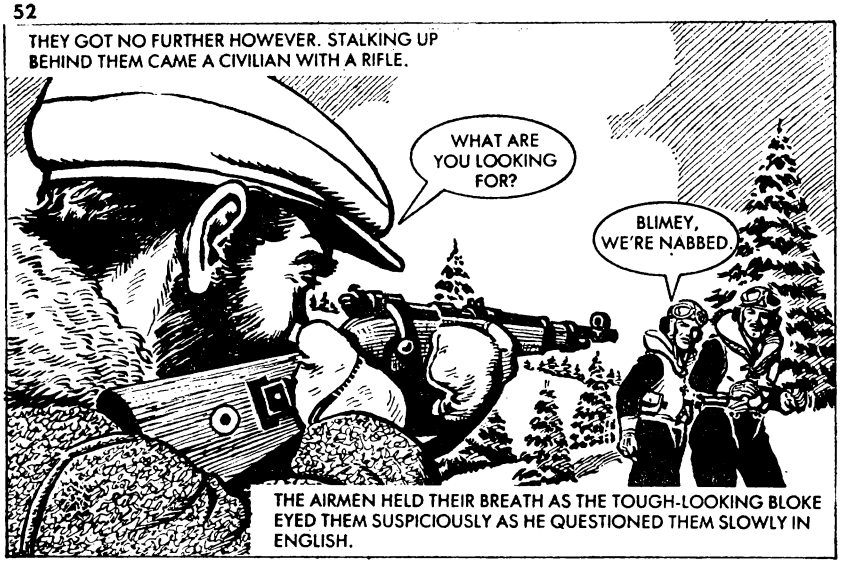

SURPRISED, THEY RACED OVER TO THE SECOND AIRCRAFT TO FIND IT ABANDONED. THE SERIAL NUMBER TOLD THEM ALL THEY NEEDED TO KNOW, HOWEVER.
THIS IS THE SKIPPER'S PLANE, BUT SOMEONE ELSE HAS BEEN HERE. LOOK AT THESE FOOTPRINTS.
THERE'S PROBABLY A GERMAN PATROL IN THE AREA.

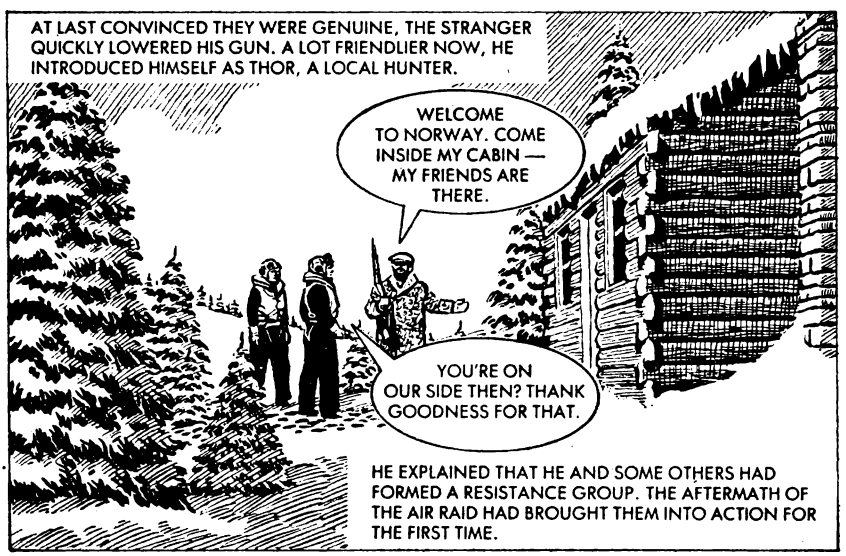
TONY WAS NOT DISCOURAGED. HE SUGGESTED TRACKING THE MYSTERY VISITORS DOWN.
THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN NORWEGIANS. ANYWAY, I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE SKIPPER.
DO THAT AND WE'LL END UP IN A PRISON CAMP FOR SURE.

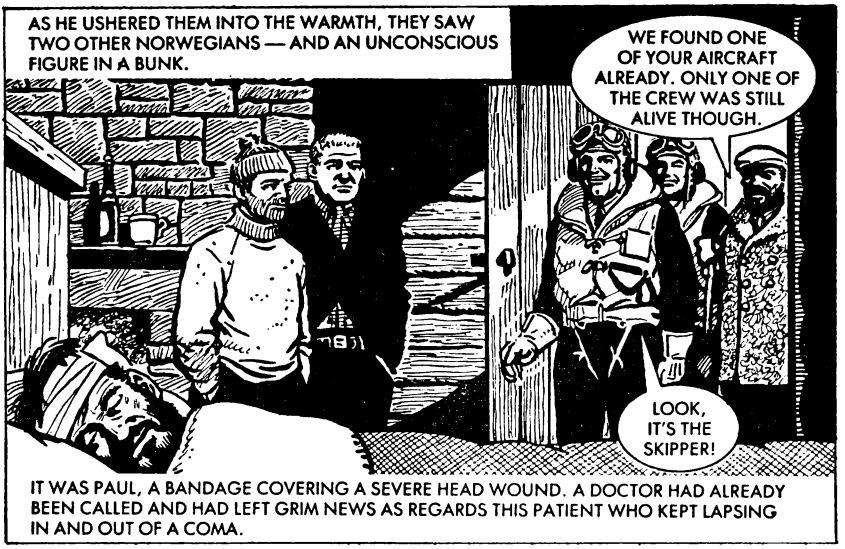
THEN A THOUGHT OCCURRED TO THE OBSERVER AND HIS ATTITUDE CHANGED COMPLETELY.
I'VE ALREADY DONE ENOUGH TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION ON THE FAMILY. A P.O.W. CAMP IS JUST THE PLACE TO LIE LOW IN UNTIL I COLLECT MY INHERITANCE AT THE END OF THE WAR.

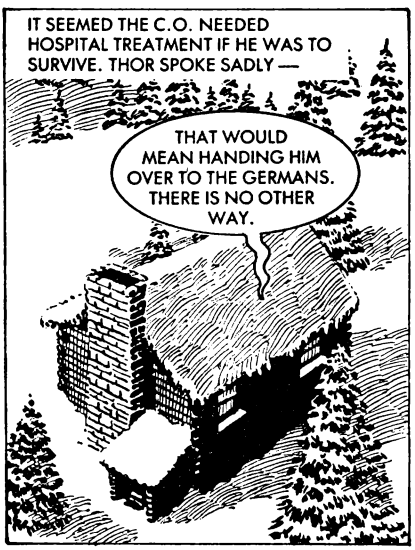
THE SUDDEN CHANGE OF MIND HAD NOT GONE UNNOTICED BY TONY. HE ATTACHED A DIFFERENT REASON TO IT, THOUGH.
FAMILY PRIDE GETTING IN THE WAY?
YOU COULD SAY THAT. BUT LET'S SAVE OUR FIGHTING FOR THE GERMANS, SHALL WE?
IN FACT, HARRISON HAD NO INTENTION OF CROSSING SWORDS WITH ANYBODY, LEAST OF ALL THE ENEMY.


FOLLOWING A TRACK THROUGH THE FOREST, THE PAIR EVENTUALLY CAME TO A MOUNTAIN CABIN. THE PLACE LOOKED DESERTED.
JOURNEY'S END . . . I WONDER WHO'S WAITING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR?
WE'LL SOON SEE.


THEY GOT NO FURTHER HOWEVER. STALKING UP BEHIND THEM CAME A CIVILIAN WITH A RIFLE.
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?
BLIMEY, WE'RE NABBED.
THE AIRMEN HELD THEIR BREATH AS THE TOUGH-LOOKING BLOKE EYED THEM SUSPICIOUSLY AS HE QUESTIONED THEM SLOWLY IN ENGLISH.


AT LAST CONVINCED THEY WERE GENUINE, THE STRANGER QUICKLY LOWERED HIS GUN. A LOT FRIENDLIER NOW, HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS THOR, A LOCAL HUNTER.
WELCOME TO NORWAY. COME INSIDE MY CABIN — MY FRIENDS ARE THERE.
YOU'RE ON OUR SIDE THEN? THANK GOODNESS FOR THAT.
HE EXPLAINED THAT HE AND SOME OTHERS HAD FORMED A RESISTANCE GROUP. THE AFTERMATH OF THE AIR RAID HAD BROUGHT THEM INTO ACTION FOR THE FIRST TIME.


AS HE USHERED THEM INTO THE WARMTH, THEY SAW TWO OTHER NORWEGIANS — AND AN UNCONSCIOUS FIGURE IN A BUNK.
WE FOUND ONE OF YOUR AIRCRAFT ALREADY. ONLY ONE OF THE CREW WAS STILL ALIVE THOUGH.
LOOK, IT'S THE SKIPPER!
IT WAS PAUL, A BANDAGE COVERING A SEVERE HEAD WOUND. A DOCTOR HAD ALREADY BEEN CALLED AND HAD LEFT GRIM NEWS AS REGARDS THIS PATIENT WHO KEPT LAPSING IN AND OUT OF A COMA.

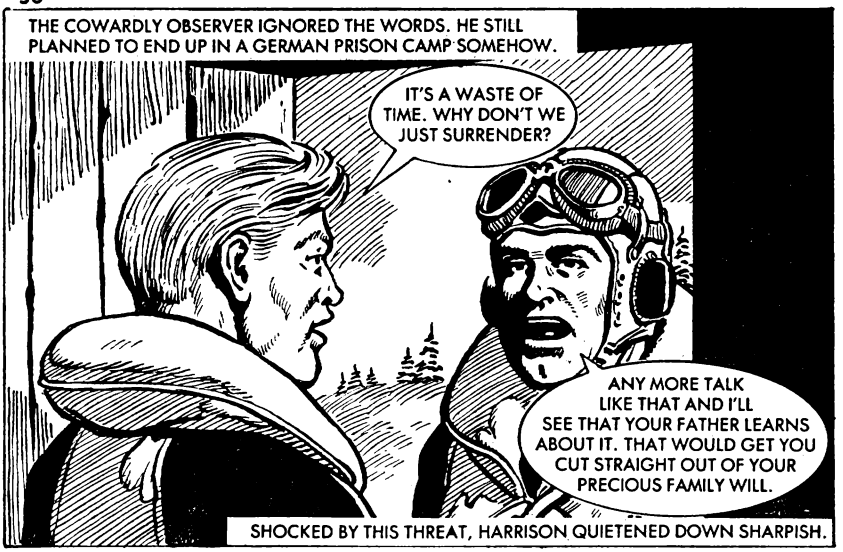

IT SEEMED THE C.O. NEEDED HOSPITAL TREATMENT IF HE WAS TO SURVIVE. THOR SPOKE SADLY —
THAT WOULD MEAN HANDING HIM OVER TO THE GERMANS. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY.

DESPITE THE PROBLEMS, TONY WAS RELUCTANT TO AGREE. INSTEAD, HE PREPARED TO TAKE A DESPERATE GAMBLE.
HAVE YOU GOT ANY TOOLS I CAN BORROW?
SURE, BUT FOR WHAT?

TONY WAS STILL WILLING TO HAVE A CRACK AT MENDING HIS DAMAGED AIRCRAFT. NOW THAT HE HAD PAUL'S SWORDFISH TO USE FOR SPARES, HE WAS ALMOST CERTAIN OF SUCCESS.
IF YOU CAN REPAIR YOUR PLANE, IT IS LESS THAN TWENTY MILES TO THE BORDER.
AND IF I THROW OUT THAT LONG RANGE TANK, IT WILL CREATE EXTRA SPACE.
DON'T BOTHER ON MY ACCOUNT — I'M NOT GOING.

HARRISON'S LACK OF ENTHUSIASM CAME AS NO SURPRISE. UNDAUNTED, TONY TOOK THE TOOL-BAG, PREPARING TO SET OFF ALONE.
IF I MAKE THAT PLANE AIRWORTHY AGAIN, HARRISON, I'LL SEE THAT YOU GET IN IT, EVEN IF I HAVE TO DRAG YOU.
AND WHAT DO WE DO WHEN THE FUEL RUNS OUT — FLAP OUR ARMS?
A GOOD POINT, DESPITE THE SOURCE. THE SHORTAGE OF FUEL WAS A MAJOR SET-BACK.

THE THOUGHT PLAGUED TONY AS HE TRUDGED TO PAUL'S PRANGED KITE.
IF THE SKIPPER'S TANKS ARE EMPTY, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH WHAT'S LEFT IN MINE.
AT THE SWORDFISH, HE BROUGHT HIS KNOWLEDGE OF MECHANICS INTO PLAY. HE REMOVED THE NECESSARY PART EASILY.
NOW TO PUT IT IN MINE AND WE'RE AWAY. PITY ABOUT THE JUICE THOUGH.
THE BADLY SHOT-UP FUEL TANKS WERE COMPLETELY EMPTY.
THE TRANSFER WAS SOON MADE, THE WORK COMPLETED. TONY RETURNED TO THE CABIN TO FIND HARRISON STANDING AT THE DOOR, CLEARLY IN A FOUL MOOD.
YOU COULDN'T EVEN FIX MY MOTOR CAR PROPERLY, STANNING, AND YOU EXPECT ME TO CLIMB BACK INTO THE PLANE.
THAT'S IT . . . OR I'LL REPORT YOU FOR DESERTION WHEN I GET BACK WITH THE SKIPPER.


THE COWARDLY OBSERVER IGNORED THE WORDS. HE STILL PLANNED TO END UP IN A GERMAN PRISON CAMP SOMEHOW.
IT'S A WASTE OF TIME. WHY DON'T WE JUST SURRENDER?
ANY MORE TALK LIKE THAT AND I'LL SEE THAT YOUR FATHER LEARNS ABOUT IT. THAT WOULD GET YOU CUT STRAIGHT OUT OF YOUR PRECIOUS FAMILY WILL.
SHOCKED BY THIS THREAT, HARRISON QUIETENED DOWN SHARPISH.

IN THE CABIN, THE NORWEGIANS HAD READIED PAUL FOR THE JOURNEY.
GOOD, THOR. IF YOU CAN CARRY THE SKIPPER TO MY PLANE, IT'LL BE SWEDEN NEXT STOP.
AND OUR FIRST RESISTANCE OPERATION WILL BE A SUCCESS, MY FRIEND.

FOR HARRISON AND HIS MISERABLE SCHEME, TIME WAS NOW QUICKLY RUNNING OUT. DESPERATELY HE TRIED ANOTHER EXCUSE TO REMAIN BEHIND.

THE SKIPPER'S NOT UP TO THIS. WHY DON'T YOU GO OFF ON YOUR OWN AND LEAVE HIM. I'LL STAY AND LOOK AFTER HIM IF YOU LIKE.

I'M NOT ABANDONING HIM FOR THE GERMANS. WE'RE FLYING, AND THAT'S THAT.

GRIMLY TONY LED THE WAY OUTSIDE, THE NORWEGIANS ARMED IN CASE THEY RAN INTO ANY ENEMY PATROLS.

THEY HAD BEEN LUCKY SO FAR, MUCH TO HARRISON'S DISMAY.

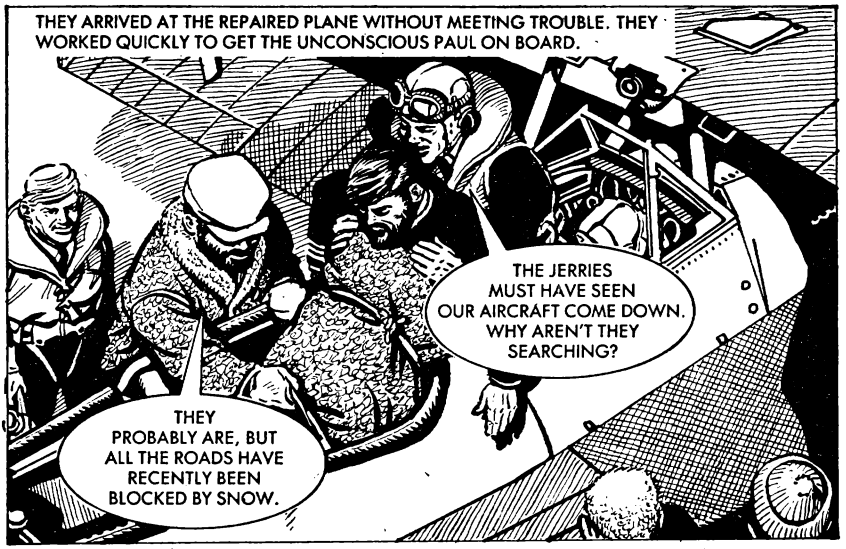
THE MIDDLE OF AN OCCUPIED COUNTRY, AND I HAVEN'T SEEN A SINGLE GERMAN! IT'S RIDICULOUS . . .

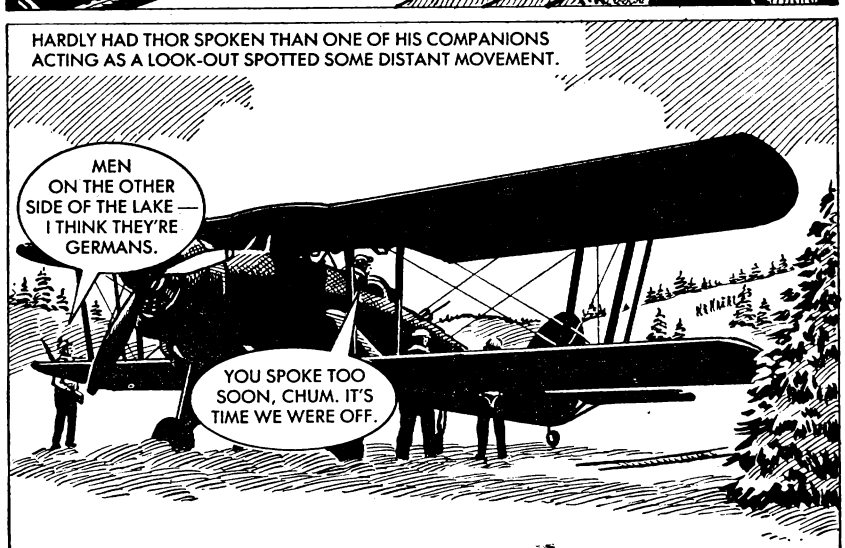
THOR, WHO HAD HEARD ALL THAT HAD GONE BETWEEN THE TWO AIRMEN, SPOKE UP GRIMLY TO TONY.

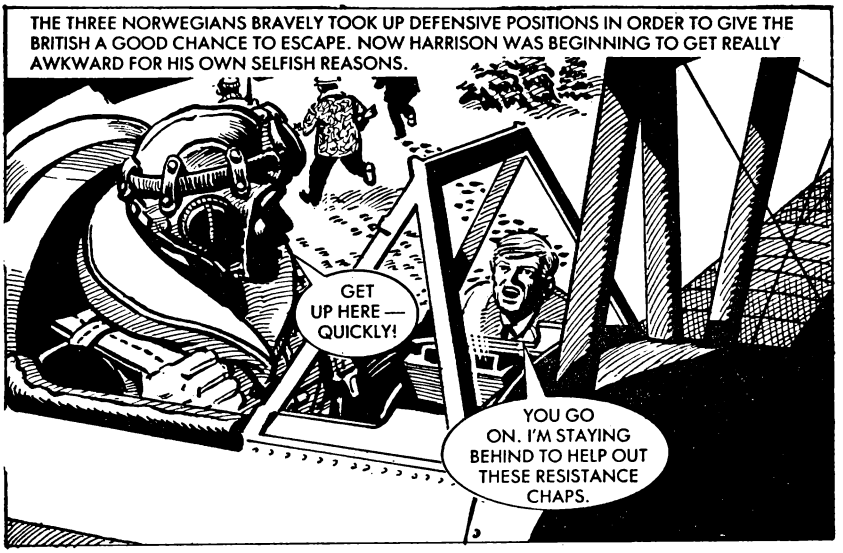
YOUR FRIEND DOESN'T SEEM KEEN TO ESCAPE.

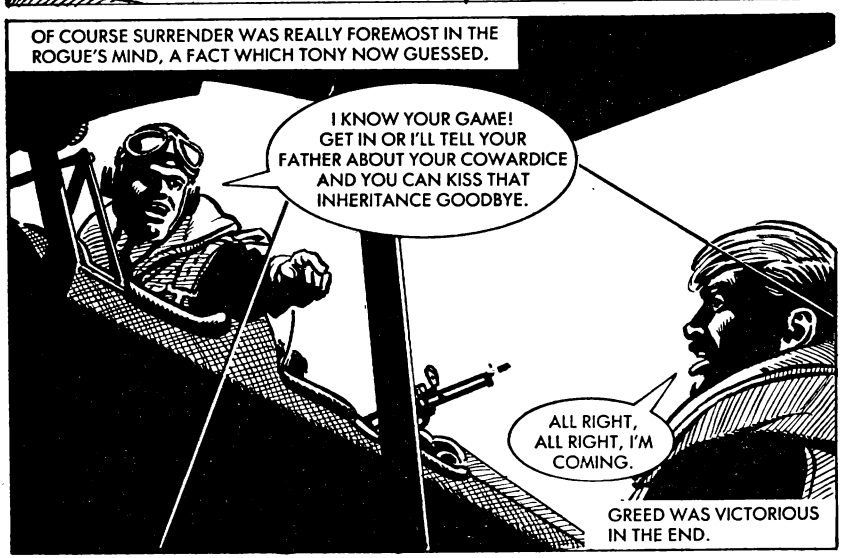
YES, AND I THINK I KNOW WHY.

HE WAS GROWING VERY SUSPICIOUS OF HIS CRAFTY PARTNER.


THEY ARRIVED AT THE REPAIRED PLANE WITHOUT MEETING TROUBLE. THEY WORKED QUICKLY TO GET THE UNCONSCIOUS PAUL ON BOARD.
THE JERRIES MUST HAVE SEEN OUR AIRCRAFT COME DOWN. WHY AREN'T THEY SEARCHING?
THEY PROBABLY ARE, BUT ALL THE ROADS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN BLOCKED BY SNOW.

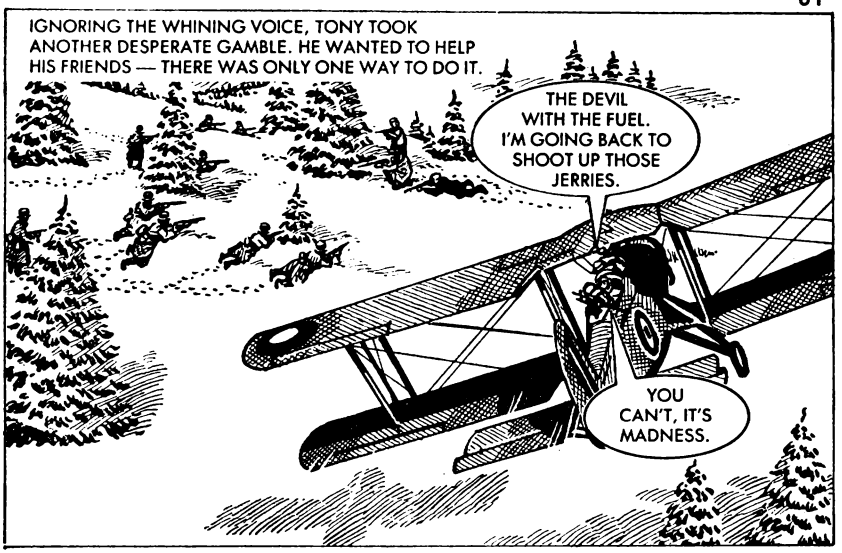

HARDLY HAD THOR SPOKEN THAN ONE OF HIS COMPANIONS ACTING AS A LOOK-OUT SPOTTED SOME DISTANT MOVEMENT.
MEN ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE — I THINK THEY'RE GERMANS.
YOU SPOKE TOO SOON, CHUM. IT'S TIME WE WERE OFF.

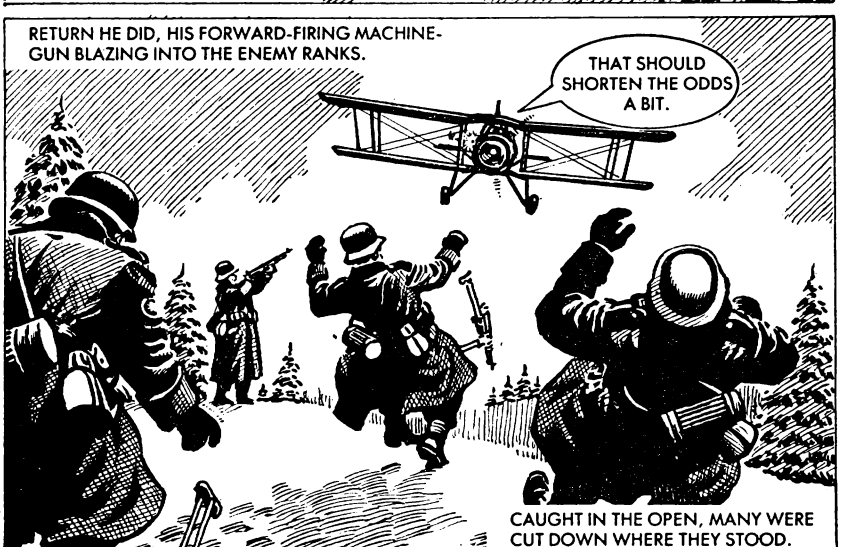

THE THREE NORWEGIANS BRAVELY TOOK UP DEFENSIVE POSITIONS IN ORDER TO GIVE THE BRITISH A GOOD CHANCE TO ESCAPE. NOW HARRISON WAS BEGINNING TO GET REALLY AWKWARD FOR HIS OWN SELFISH REASONS.
GET UP HERE — QUICKLY!
YOU GO ON. I'M STAYING BEHIND TO HELP OUT THESE RESISTANCE CHAPS.

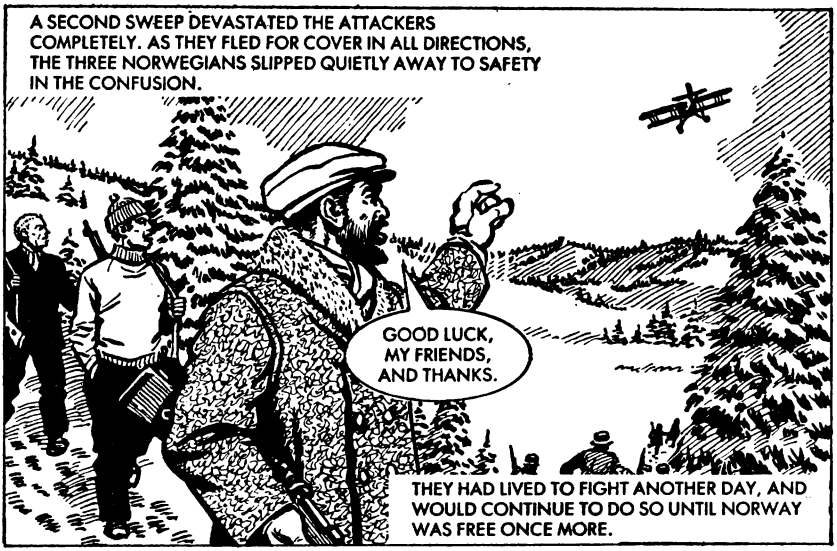

OF COURSE SURRENDER WAS REALLY FOREMOST IN THE ROGUE'S MIND, A FACT WHICH TONY NOW GUESSED.
I KNOW YOUR GAME! GET IN OR I'LL TELL YOUR FATHER ABOUT YOUR COWARDICE AND YOU CAN KISS THAT INHERITANCE GOODBYE.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, I'M COMING.
GREED WAS VICTORIOUS IN THE END.

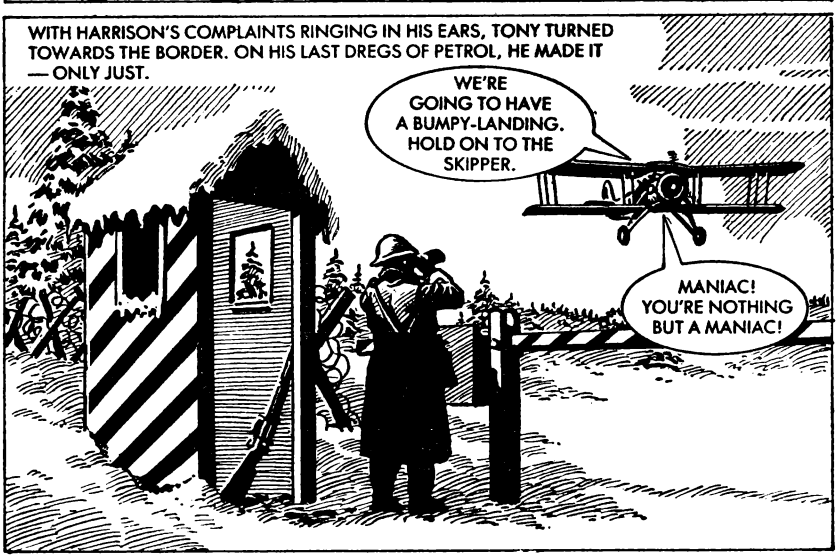
THE SWORDFISH ENGINE OPENED UP WITH A ROAR. TONY CONFIDENTLY BEGAN TO TAXI AWAY. BEHIND HIM THOUGH, HE LEFT THE NORWEGIANS IN DEEP TROUBLE.
THERE ARE TOO MANY GERMANS. WE CAN'T HOLD THEM OFF FOR LONG.
THE BRITISH ARE FREE. THAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING.

TONY TOOK TO THE AIR, KEEPING ONE EYE ON THE FUEL GAUGE. IT WAS ALREADY TOUCHING EMPTY YET HE HAD OTHER THINGS ON HIS MIND.
THOR AND HIS MATES WILL BE MASSACRED. THERE MUST BE SOME WAY WE CAN HELP OUT.
FORGET IT. WE'VE ENOUGH TROUBLE ALREADY.


IGNORING THE WHINING VOICE, TONY TOOK ANOTHER DESPERATE GAMBLE. HE WANTED TO HELP HIS FRIENDS — THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY TO DO IT.
THE DEVIL WITH THE FUEL. I'M GOING BACK TO SHOOT UP THOSE JERRIES.
YOU CAN'T, IT'S MADNESS.


RETURN HE DID, HIS FORWARD-FIRING MACHINE-GUN BLAZING INTO THE ENEMY RANKS.
THAT SHOULD SHORTEN THE ODDS A BIT.
CAUGHT IN THE OPEN, MANY WERE CUT DOWN WHERE THEY STOOD.

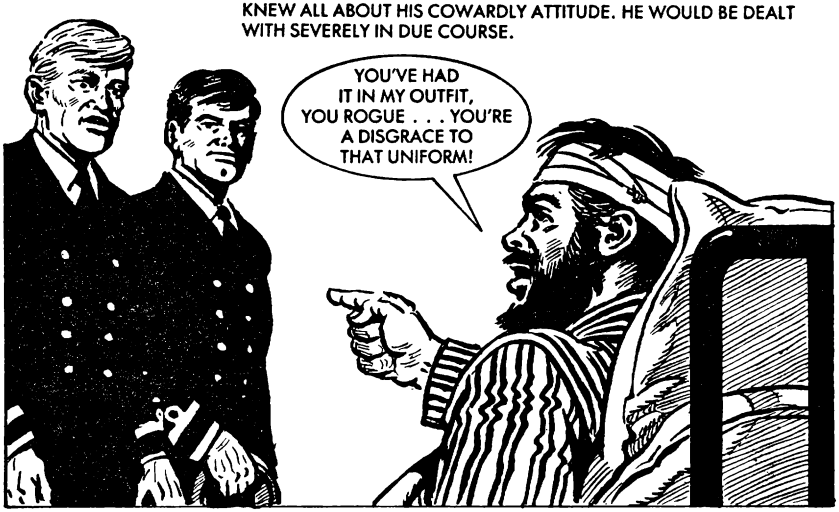

A SECOND SWEEP DEVASTATED THE ATTACKERS COMPLETELY. AS THEY FLED FOR COVER IN ALL DIRECTIONS, THE THREE NORWEGIANS SLIPPED QUIETLY AWAY TO SAFETY IN THE CONFUSION.
GOOD LUCK, MY FRIENDS, AND THANKS.
THEY HAD LIVED TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY, AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO UNTIL NORWAY WAS FREE ONCE MORE.


WITH HARRISON'S COMPLAINTS RINGING IN HIS EARS, TONY TURNED TOWARDS THE BORDER. ON HIS LAST DREGS OF PETROL, HE MADE IT — ONLY JUST.
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A BUMPY-LANDING. HOLD ON TO THE SKIPPER.
MANIAC! YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A MANIAC!

THE SWORDFISH CRUNCHED TO THE GROUND IN A SMALL CLEARING. SWEDISH TROOPS SOON SWARMED TO THE SCENE. PAUL WAS IMMEDIATELY WHISKED AWAY TO HOSPITAL, HIS CONDITION CRITICAL.
JUST TAKE CARE OF OUR SKIPPER, WILL YOU?
DON'T WORRY — YOU'RE ALL SAFE NOW.
THE NEUTRAL AUTHORITIES WOULD ARRANGE THEIR PASSAGE HOME AS SOON AS IT WAS DIPLOMATICALLY POSSIBLE.

WHILE THEY REMAINED IN SWEDEN, PAUL BEGAN TO MEND WELL IN HOSPITAL. HARRISON LEARNED NOW THAT THE SKIPPER HAD NOT LOST HIS OLD EDGE.
YOU SHOWED YOUR TRUE COLOURS BACK IN NORWAY, HARRISON. I HEARD QUITE A FEW OF THE THINGS YOU SAID.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SIR?

THE OBSERVER'S FACE DROPPED AS PAUL ANNOUNCED THAT HE KNEW ALL ABOUT HIS COWARDLY ATTITUDE. HE WOULD BE DEALT WITH SEVERELY IN DUE COURSE.



AS HARRISON SLUNK AWAY IN DISGRACE KNOWING HE WAS FINISHED COMPLETELY, PAUL TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO TONY. FOR HIM THERE WAS TO BE A COMMENDATION.

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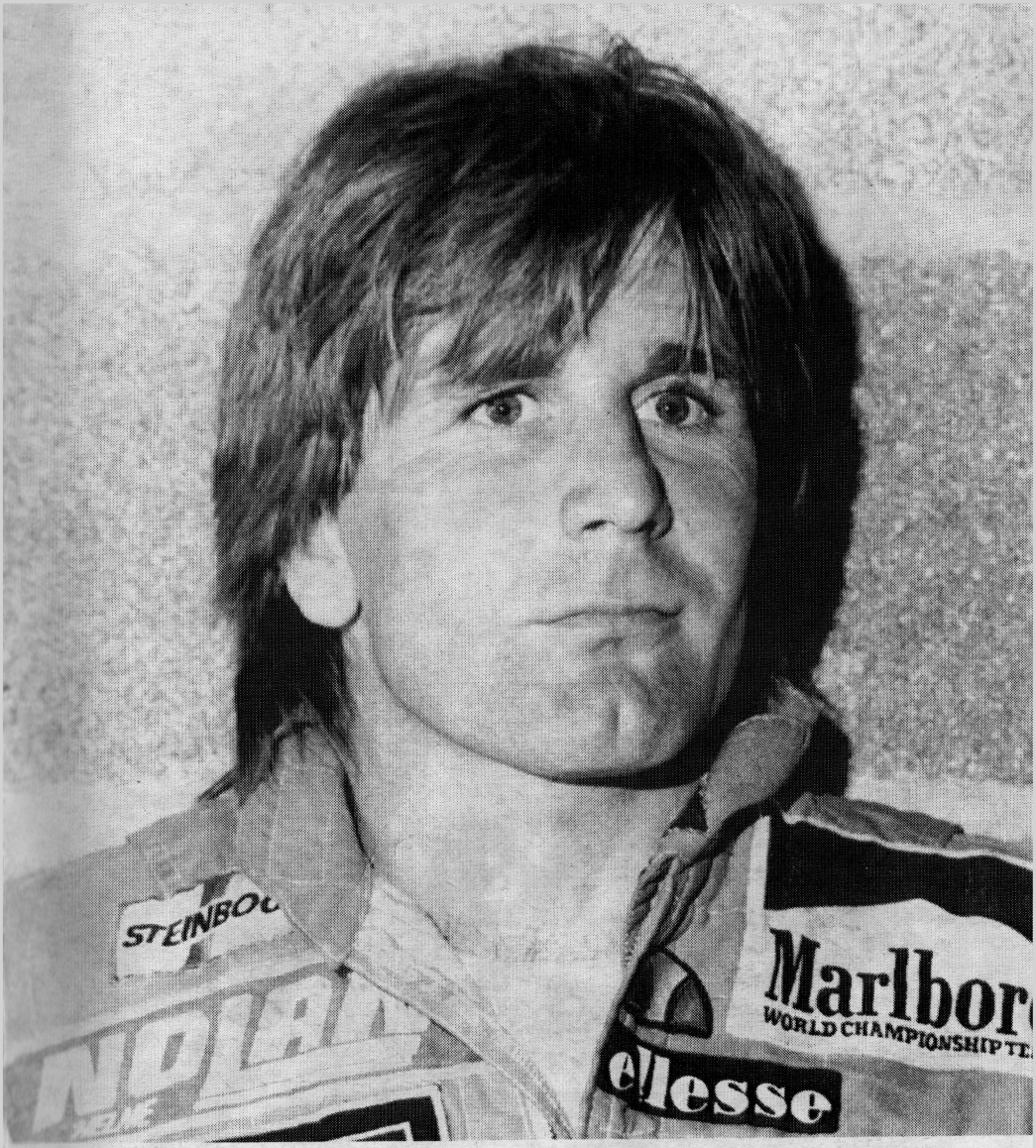

Stars of Formula One—Manfred Winkelhock

ICE-COLD COURAGE

OUTDATED, lumbering and cumbersome — yet Fairey Swordfish, nicknamed " Stringbags ", were incredibly successful machines. They were truly great planes — and great pilots flew them, like Tony Stanning who was eager to be in action.

But Tony was going to need all his courage on this latest mission to attack a German battleship, for the danger wouldn't come from the enemy guns alone. It would come from the rear cockpit too, because his observer was a useless coward . . .

Commando